

## PREFACE

This historical book, entitled “L'ISLAM DI IERI E DI OGGI”, was actually translated into English in 1992.

It is necessarily polyglot volume that needed a herculean effort to maintain its spirit.

Though no professional translator is permitted to alter the gist of the original text, some isolated words, phrases or entire sections, had to be cut out due to social, religious sensitivity or transgression of faith.

The entire last part of the book, as well, has been left out due to lack of coherence to our subject `matter.

The original Italian title of this book itself “*Islam of Yesterday and of Today*”, is a misnomer per se. I dare say this because Islam, as a dogma and an absolute guide for man, was, is and will remain the same, unalterable.

Therefore, the English title of this book has necessarily been found to be fitter.

I am certain that this erudite Italian, Cerulli, would have given me a nudge and blessed this infringement. This highly illuminated scholar enjoys the gratitude of the Harari ethnic group of Ethiopia.

Emran M. Waber  
2013



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## INTRODUCTION

I have gathered some of my essays pertaining to Islam and its old and recent history, hitherto scattered in more than one publication and some unpublished, in this book. The first ones, in the order of this book, are those concerning the religious and political nature of Islam in general; essays about Islam in different countries follow, where - *multas per gentes et multa per sequeora vectus* - I took up my abode and thereafter conducted a direct study.

My writings on Islam in Somalia which had been integrated in three books of my *Somalia* have been omitted for obvious reasons; and the ones regarding the relationships among the Muslim world, poetry, Italian philosophy in the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance, like - of course - my *Libro Della Scala* and other articles that followed, have also been omitted; and I might do their regroupings elsewhere.

I hope that the regrouping of this disjunct part of my scientific activity will be of use to scholars and above all, to the young ones to whom we must pass over that glorious tradition of the Italian school for Oriental Studies that we have tried to support with our literary works.

On my part, I know, only too well, that separating oneself from an accomplished work and leaving it in the lurch is once too often tantamount to enjoying a gloomy satisfaction. Worse still, the gloom regarding this very book is worse because, whilst perusing and re-perusing its pages, which touch upon the start of 1917 up to this very day, I have been overpowered by a very strong memory of *Dear Masters* such as Carlo Alfonso Nallino and Giorgio Levi Della Vida, of affectionate colleagues and comrades of work and scientific life, such as *Michelangelo Guidi*, *Ugo Monneret de Villard* and many more, all who, during the past years, have left this world. Yes indeed, while I was rereading some pages of my own book, it seemed to me that I was still continuing my friendly conversations with them, in a community of friendship of ideas that I was

used to for a long time. Thus, the painful imprint cannot possibly break up without our wishing that the new generation of scholars would give new fruits and a new prestige to these studies to which we have given all our love. Francesco Gabrieli has suggested and demanded that I write this book. It is dedicated to him today, not only as a token of admiration for what he represents in the field of Arabic studies, thus honouring the Italian school, but also as a symbol of gratitude for having enabled me to give my own name once more to that Institute for Oriental Studies to which a chain of memories does bind me.



# **I      HISTORY**



## 1. *ISLAM IN THE HISTORY OF EARLY MIDDLE AGES*<sup>+</sup>

When one has to evaluate one of the main movements of human history, after having rejected the easy temptation of entrusting its explanation to a *marvel* or to *luck*, it is essential that one examines the circumstances of the historical, political, economic or cultural incidences in which that movement has manifested itself. This is self-evident. But it might be as well to add that, if doing so is enough or can be enough to explain the development and the final success or failure, on one hand, and on the other one, to evaluate the source of that movement, or better, the origin of that historical change, it is necessary to keep in mind when one ascertains the causes that, not only the facts of happenings which have really come to us as a result of historical researches, but rather that these facts were known to those whose new events were determinative; and therefore the knowledge that, true or imperfectly true or a flat falsity, they had had regarding those facts would determine the reactions. If we are inclined to grin at the subject matter, we can almost conclude that a historical truth can be the daughter of falsity; on the other hand, a historical falsity runs the risk of being the daughter of truth. It is a complicated genealogy; but it is an old profession to that shadows as if they were steady and to grasp the air believing it to be Virgil embraced. Under such light, we are supposed to see the birth of Islam. However, we can evaluate that event in relation to what historical research has brought to our knowledge today; that the political, religious and cultural phenomena of the outer world could have been known and could have pushed the Arabs of Mecca and Medina to pursue an action under the guidance of a highly sensitive spirit such as the Prophet Muhammed's.

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<sup>+</sup>[*L'Occidente e l'Islam Alto Medioevo (Weeks of Study by the Italian Centre for Studies on early Middle Ages, XII, 2-8 April, 1964), tome II, p. 983-1007*]

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Islam rose when the delicate equilibrium in the Near East, on the edge of the Arab Peninsula, was upset by events of a paramount importance: the conquest of Jerusalem by Persia on 5<sup>th</sup> May 614 and then the victorious return of Emperor Heraclius to Jerusalem on 21<sup>st</sup> March 630 together with the restitution of the Cross. The economic, political and cultural history of Arabia had been linked with the rivalry between the Roman and Persian empires for centuries. Therefore, the ups and downs of the War of Crusade II and Heraclius not only had a strong consequence for world interests and even more psychological repercussions, but were particularly felt in Arabia and chiefly in north Arabia, where the Prophet Muhammed had been active in preaching his new religion. Owing to the final defeat inflicted by Heraclius, the Saxon empire was no longer able to heave a sigh of relief before an extreme decadence; and because, in the final analysis, the two warring Empires used to have a common aspiration in defending the frontiers of Mediterranean civilisation against waves of alien populations. This defence used to appear as a compromise due to the weakness of Persia and the relative and demonstrated fragility of the Oriental Roman Empire when Syria, Palestine and Egypt were taken away from it long ago.

It is obvious, therefore, that the psychological consequences, as it were, of those events were several and exceeded the historically immediate ones; so much so that they had had a much longer duration and likewise made themselves felt wide and far away. Jerusalem, the heart of the Christian world, had fallen; the Sacred Cross had been lost and taken away. Christianity seemed to have received a sound beating. Then the retaliation, the victorious campaign of the Emperor and the rescue of the sacred city and the Cross, followed. Here we are then vis-à-vis epic material riches; and in the long run, they will be bound to find an inspiration in the Orient as well as in the Occident. In Persia, Khosroe would become a hero of epic deeds in Firdausi's and in another novel, to

the extent that his love of Sirin<sup>1</sup> the Christian damsel is still being sung of to this very day.

Sirin, according to legend, the Sacred Cross would be entrusted by Khosroe.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, another tradition shown in the passages of Tabriz, demonstrates the place where the Cross was kept.<sup>3</sup> The Persian conquest of Jerusalem would be commented on or narrated<sup>4</sup> and would become a pivotal tale around which others would group, as in analogous cycles, such as anecdotes and tale of various origins. These tales, which have already grouped themselves would eventually circulate, in their turn, in more various types of literature: Arabic, Georgian Armenian and then reaching other different forms of literature in the Medieval Latin, albeit of diverse aspects.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This famous poem is by Nizami (in XII<sup>th</sup> century) up to the epoch of the popular literature of our days. And, among others, Khosroe's love of the beautiful Sirin has inspired the inscription on the golden paten offered by the Persian king to the famous sanctuary of St. Sergius of Rusafa, an inscription kept by Evagrio (and in a different text, by Theophrastus) and of whose authenticity P. Peeters had defended (P. Peeters, *Les Exvoto De Khosrau Aparwez A Saint Serge De Rosapha*, In *Memoires De L'Academie Des Inscriptions*, t XLIV, 1951).

<sup>2</sup> According to the Arabic text edited by P. Peeters, *Laprise De Jerusalem Par Les Perses In Melanges De L'Universite St. Joseph*, IX, 1923, p. 33: «The king had a Syrian concubine who requested the Venerated Cross because she was Christian, though a Nestorian. She then had it in her possession».

<sup>3</sup> J. Chardin, *Voyages En Perse Et Autres Lieux De L'Orient*, Amsterdam, 1711, V. I, p. 184

<sup>4</sup> Two 'Anachronistic Odes' by Patriarch Sofronio (published in *Revue de l'Orient Chretien*, II, 1897, p. 123-143); the encyclical letter of Patriarch Zaccaria P. G. Migne, LXXVI, c. 3228 \_ 3233); the mutilated relationship *de persica captivitate* (P. G. Migne, LXXXVI, c. 3236\_3238); the *Exomologesis Anthiochi* (P. G. Migne, LXXIX, c. 1846-1856); a fragment of the Sermon II, and the ancient one by S. Saba (P. G. Migne, LXXIX, c. 1764 the History of *Heraclio* in Armenian, by Sebeos, the Bishop of Bagratuni, translated by F. Macler, *Histoire d'Heraclius*, Paris 1904); the Arabic text *Fath Madinat al-Quds* which had been published, in a standard, by P. Peeters in the above mentioned works; and his Georgian version published (and translated) by N. Marr, *Antiokh Stratig. Plenenie Jerusalima Persami* V. 614, Petersburg 1909; besides passages by Syrian chroniclers and Byzantine historians.

<sup>5</sup> As well as the story 'Medicine of Inviolability' or 'the Stratagem of the Virgin' about which there exist already numerous researches in literature (Cf. now with G. Levi Della Vida, *Fonti Arabe Della Isabella Ariostesca*, In *Aneddotti E Svaghi Arabi E Non Arabi*, Naples 1959, pp. 170-190) up to when it comes to Ariosto; also the story of the two young martyrs who refuse to worship fire, and then included in the Armenian apophthegm; as well as the story of the false accusation of lasciviousness against Patriarch Zaccaria, an accusation which the new-born denies prodigiously (of. G. Levi della Vida, regarding this story in his *Leggende Agiografiche Nell' Islam*, which is in *Atti Del Convegno Internazionale: L'Oriente Cristiano Nella Storia Della Civiltà*' Rome 1964, pp. 143-

Thus, conversely, the re-conquest of Heraclius, sung in Heraclius by Giorgius of Pisidia in Greek,<sup>6</sup> and narrated in Armenian by Sebeos,<sup>7</sup> was destined to be considered as a historical preamble of the Crusaders; which was later considered a historical premise of the Crusaders. William of Tyre would initiate his own overseas administration where Heraclius had left off<sup>8</sup> and the French version of the history of William of Tyre<sup>9</sup> would take the title of *Livre d'Eracles*, and would spread the glory of the Emperor.<sup>10</sup> Later, Heraclius would be favoured in his undertakings, according to the Anglo-Roman collection, by a miracle of Mary (narrated in both poetry and prose) in answer to prodigies already obtained by his predecessors, Arcadius and Lion I.<sup>11</sup> In the XII<sup>th</sup> century, Gautier d'Arras

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144 and 151); and with the anecdote by the Syrian regarding the life of St. Ephraim [and the history of the martyrs in the Jerusalemite cistern of Mamilla. Cf. J. M. Sauget, *Premieres Recherches Sur l'Origine Et Les Caracteres Des Synaxaires Melkites*, Bruxelles 1969, pp. 379-380]. Many of these tales reach the medieval Latin literature.

<sup>6</sup> George of Pisidia, who had already sung the first tentative of Heraclius's revenge in his poem (P. G. Migne, XCII, c. 1197-1260), celebrated later in his two books, 1297-1332) the conquest against Khosroe. Moreover, the echo of Heraclius' victory over the Persians is to be found in the same very famous hymn *Akhathistos* with the verse, which is an elusive one tied up with the Zoroastrian fire cult (P. P. Migne, XCII, cit., 1339 and circa 1349).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the above, Note 4.

<sup>8</sup> The text of *Historia Rerum In Partibus Trasmariinis Gestarum* by William of Tyre (*Historiens Des Croisades, Histories Occidentales*. Vol. I - II) which in fact starts with '*tradunt venters historiae et idipsum habent orientales traditiones quod, tempore quo heraclius augustus romanorum administravit imperium*'.

<sup>9</sup> Published, together with William of Tyre's, in the above-mentioned collection. It might be useful to note that in the French passage above: '*Les ansiennes estoires dient que Eracles qui mout fu bons Crestiens governa 'Empire de Rome' le' Orientales traditions*' from the omitted Latin text.

<sup>10</sup> William of Tyre (and the book *Livre D'Eracles*) have also kept up the tradition of Khosroe the Christian (cit., quit., Vol. I, p. 11), when touching upon the marriage of Khosroe, it presents him as '*cuius gratia coniugii lavacrum redemptionis adeptus est*' '*por l'amor de sa fame et des Romains Quistoient Chrestiens se fist oil Cosdroez bautisier*', *Ibidem*, p. 12); while Khosroe himself in the dedication of the paten to St. Sergius (see above on p.4, note 1), though its authenticity could be judged, he says just the contrary. (cit., Wor., p. 108 [12 of the extract]).

<sup>11</sup> *Icest ymago fist grant miracle*

*El tens l'empeureur Aracle*

*quant il al realme de Perse*

*Ala encountre la gent perverse*

*Ke Cosdroe out a gouverner*

(H. Kjelmann, *La Deuxieme Collection Anglo Normande Des Miracles De La SainteVierge*, Paris-Uppsala 1922, p. 236).

would celebrate Heraclius<sup>12</sup> in his poems. While Khosroe was taking Jerusalem and was having the Cross brought to him in his magic castle made of prodigiously faked rain and flashes of lightening, Heraclius challenged the adversary prince to a single duel where he decapitates Khosroe and baptises his son later on.<sup>13</sup> Heraclius, the wise counsellor, is said in the first part of the poem by Gautier d'Arras, the imperial hero:<sup>14</sup> and another medieval legend gives us Heraclius as sapient astrologist who had read of the imminent Muslim invasion<sup>15</sup> in the celestial body. Even more: this Jerusalemite gesture would be commemorated by the Christian

<sup>12</sup> The edition of the poem in: *Ouevres De Gautier D'arras: ille et Galeron; et Eracles*, ed. E. Loseth, Paris 1890 (*Bibliothèque franc. du moyen age*, VI-VII)

<sup>13</sup> From Gautier d'Arras' source of information (the Passionate of the ms. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Latin 3718. Cf. ed. faral, *d'un passionnaire latin a un roman francais: quelques sources immediates du roman d'Eracles*, in *Romania* t. XLVI, 1920, pp. 512-536) the magic castle is described in Latin: "*fecerat namque sibi [Khosroe] turrin argenteam in qua inter lucentibus gemmis thronum extruxerat aureum ubi solis quadrigam et lune et stellarum imaginem collocaverat*" (*'Un ciel ot fait faire li fous Achieres pieres et a elous ... liuec se faisoit adorer*'). We might think it strange to come across such a similarity with the passage of *Heraklias* by Giorgius di Pisidia (P. G. Migne, XCII, c; 1331; v. 200-204):

<sup>14</sup> And here the source of Gautier of Arras, as has already been noticed by the ed. of Faral (cit., works on p.531), is sought after among the ones which A. D'Anona had assessed for the similar story by Novellino, though ignoring the poem *Eracles*, in *Studi Di Critica E Storia Letteraria* IV, Bologna 1880, pp. 300-302.

<sup>15</sup> Among various sources the oldest one seems to be the chronicle attributed to Isidor Pacense (mid VIII<sup>th</sup> century) who has the hint '*et per stellarum astrologico praemoneretur iudicio*' (P. L. Migne, XCVI, c. 1254). But the legend just elaborated (probably from Oriental Christian sources) is to be found in the works of Goffredo da Viterbo who, in his pantheon narrates the same as '*Eraclius ... Insuper fit mathematicus et astrologus. tunc per constellationes cognovit quod homines circumcisi essent eius imperium vastaturi*'. Hereolius gathers that the horoscope refers to the Jews and forces the Jews of the Empire to convert and asks king Dagobert to do the same in the Frankish Kingdom. '*non multo post agarent qui omnes sunt circumcisi imperium eius invadunt*'. So Heraclius sets out to meet the Muslims with his soldiers, but at night an Angel descends from the sky and kills 52 thousand Christian soldiers with his sword and so Heraclius dies in anguish; the Muslims find no more resistance. And thus Goffred di Viterbo concludes: '*o judicial dei justissima! quia eraclius per virtutem et signaculum victoriosissime crucis oblitus magis in auguritis quam in divino auxilio confidebat ab agarenis qui nec inter viros fuerant computandi meruit feliciter superari*' (*monumenta germaniae hist. script.* XXXI, p. 196). Regarding the Pantheon by Goffred da Viterbo and the use of the Oriental Christian sources, Cf. my own *Libro Della Scala E La Questione Delle Fonti Arabo-Spagnole Della Divina Commedia*, the City of the Vatican 1949, p. 427 and 522. This is historically important because it proves how the intensification of the epic legend about Heraclius as the precursor of the Crusaders, in the Occident, corresponds with the legend of Heraclius in Oriental Christian's, which, among others, also explains the conquests of Islam. [For the extension of the legend about Khosroe in the Orient and Africa, Cf. hereunder, on p. 39].

churches by linking it with the oldest feast of Exaltation of the Cross and establishing in memory *the Fasting of Heraclius* in oriental Christianity, and *Tsoma Herqal* of the Ethiopians. It is still being observed to this very day, during the week that precedes Lent.

This vast complex of legends, historical traditions, poems, ecclesiastical precepts etc. in various and different countries, is proof of the profound meaning that the fall and the re-conquest of Jerusalem has had in the Orient and thereafter.

Still doubt remains that the faraway origins of the *castle* could really be *house of the sacred fire* towers (*Atesh-ga*) of the Zoroastrians, a rebound in the Medieval Occident. Thus, there was the collision of the two empires at the threshold of the same Arab Peninsula, in Palestine, then the representative in Arab territories. The centre of the two great monotheistic religions would be dedicated to the Muslims; in the solemn initial of the XXX<sup>th</sup> Sura of the Koran: «the Romans have been vanquished in a faraway place of the earth, but they, in the aftermath of their defeat, shall vanquish within a few years». An emotive announcement of the fall of one of the colossi, an announcement of a further destructive struggle which destroyed both empires who were delimiting Arabia and had brought their combat, together with their own proxies, to the land of Arabia. The weakness of the two colossi would be manifested, ascertains the Koran.

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Before the elapse of ten years, another event that the Prophet would later preach on, of local character this time, and dependent on a general world situation, had immediately shaken the Meccan surroundings. The kingdom of Axum on the African shore of the Red Sea had traditionally followed a policy of friendship for its own economic interests with the Oriental Roman Empire. This coincided with the tutelage of the maritime route to the Indies assured by the Empire instead



of the land route that the Persians used to patronise.<sup>16</sup> In the first ten years of the VI<sup>th</sup> century, an active exchange of embassies between Constantinople and Axum during the reigns of Justin I and Justinian ended when an expedition sent by the Ethiopian King Kaleb to southern Arabia under the command of Ella Atsbaha, (preparations occurred circa 525 in the port of Adulis).

This resulted in the Ethiopian conquest of Yemen, a conquest that locally assumes the aspect of the victory of Christianity. Therefore, it was a victory of monotheism over south Arabian paganism. The exterior aspect, so to say, of this situation is, I gather, also indicated from the fact that Nonnos<sup>17</sup> is sent by Justinian as an ambassador to Prince Gassanid the First, the traditional Arab ally with Constantinople;<sup>18</sup> and from there to Axum, and sure enough, the Ethiopian undertaking in Yemen appears to be like a faction of Arab politics in the Oriental Roman Empire. Later, when the Ethiopian ruler had accomplished the conquest of Yemen, he would declare his independence from the king of Axum, and the hypothesis, as has been touched upon by myself elsewhere,<sup>19</sup> that Abraha, who was already a party to one of the two Greco-Roman families of Adulis, had reacted in such a manner, being himself in correspondence with the interests of Constantinople, that the Ethiopian invasion of the South-Arabian territory was convenient. In the long run this was less important than the two shores of the Red Sea, which had total supremacy on maritime navigation of the Indies in that sector, fallen in the hands of a sole Ethiopian sovereign, so much an ally and a friend.

The Ethiopian conquest of Yemen, harshly asserted in the great inscription on the Marib Dam, had incited a violent reaction among the

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. my own essay: *Punti Di Vista Sulla Storia Dell' Etiopia, In Atti Del (I) Convegno Internazionale Di Studi Etiopici Accademia Dei Lincei*, Rome 1960, p. 11-21.

<sup>17</sup> (*Fragmenta Historicorum*, ed. C. Muller, Paris, v. IV, p. 179).

<sup>18</sup> It was, as has been seen now, Qais al-Harith's nephew. The above-mentioned fragment (which derives from Biblioteca di Fozio) furnishes a good proof of a group friendly relations among these princes of Constantinople; Qais's on Mu'awiya, had already been sent to Justinian as a hostage.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Punti Di Vista Sulla Storia Dell'etiopia*, cit., on p. 15

Arabs. This fact has been revealed to us by the so-called South Arabian Saga. A national struggle conducted against the Ethiopian invaders finds its dominant theme, an echo so profound and long lasting that, at the end of the XIV<sup>th</sup> (or the beginning of the XV<sup>th</sup>) century, would still give an argument regarding Sayf Du Yazan, the hero, assuming that the name of the Ethiopian sovereign is, and not less than, Kaleb Ella Atsbaha, now nine or ten centuries old, but here we have Sayfa 'Ar'ad, the effective ruler from 1344 to 1372.

Furthermore, as a parallel to the South Arabian saga, another cycle of traditions is thriving in northern Arabia, in the very region of Mecca, as a consequence of the Ethiopian episode: the attempt made by Abraha seems to have asserted itself also in the north of the Peninsula, with at least one single raid; and probably owing to a suggestion received, direct or indirect, from the Oriental Empire. The Oriental Empire was trying to make the acquired positions of the new Ethiopian prince, an ally, more active and more menacing in Arabia. This was supposed to be within the general panorama of the political-military initiatives in the periphery of the Persian Empire. Nevertheless, Abraha's raid in the direction of Mecca, some years before the birth of Muhammed, had made the Ethiopian attack against that political, commercial and pagan religious centre; and the repercussion of this event though local but historically connected with the rivalry of the two great empires of the epoch, very great in the region of Mecca, which had reawakened sentiments and imaginations due to the concrete threat, as has been proven in the traditions collected by Arab historians. These reactions are to be solemnly recalled in the Koran in Sura CV of the Elephant: «Have you not witnessed how your Lord has dealt with those of the Elephant? ».

Thus, the direct clash of the two empires, the Roman and the Persian, on the threshold of Arabia in Palestine, between Khosroe II and Heraclius, and the armed threat against Mecca conducted some decades before remain thriving and live in the memory of Meccans. These have been inserted in the Koranic Suras CV and XXX regarding world history and the proclamation of the rise of Islam: and, by dint of the Arab reaction

to the danger of the invasion and owing to the weakening of both imperial colossi who were surrounding Arabia, they announce colossal movements which should have brought up the foundation of an Arab empire on the debris of the two ancient colossi; an essential factor indeed of the medieval civilisation in the Mediterranean Basin and in Asia.

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This situation in world politics rendered the originality of Islam plausible in the sense that Arabia, a region of essential value for both the Indies routes, the maritime and the terrestrial, and therefore a traditional site of combat between the two imperial colossi of the old order, now found itself in a situation of preparing itself for self-initiated conflict and not combat due to an impetus of one or the other imperial politics. This political and economic originality, the originality of the religion of Islam and its rising fits well, with Christianity and Judaism, already well diffused in their own community islets in Arabia. The idea of monotheism, which used to rekindle psychological reactions already apparent against the old paganism, had started to manifest itself. But neither Judaism with its own national character, nor Christianity, have had any reconnection in popular Arab mentality with the influence of the Oriental Empire, and of recent, with the Ethiopian undertakings, we remember the legend about the very invaluable churches built by the invaders in Sana'a, and in other places in Yemen, which appeared to be destined to exercise an immediate attraction. In the end, pilgrimages to the sacred places of Mecca were bound and were not devoid of some interests for the people of that region; moreover, those practices were deeply rooted because it was not easy to renounce practising them. Therefore, as I have just stated, it reflects the originality of Islam: a religion which not only affirms monotheism but also declares it rigidly; and which, owing to this fundamental imposition, fits in the great traditions of the two other religions of the *People of a Book* and of the *Children of Abraham*. It becomes presented as an avenger, so much more acceptable to the Arabs, through the final Revelation dogma of the *Seal of the Prophets*, which, as

in the case of Suras revealed in Medina would proclaim, is Arabic and in Arabic received it is, so that the Divine Word comes to be understood. A new religion, therefore, which calls upon the two oldest religions and, at the same time, owing its sacred words to the formal adaptation and substantial connotation of the Arab mentality, for its assimilation of the Meccan Pilgrimage and the sanctity of Jerusalem, is already original and unconfined, right from the dawn of its birth.

Which elements of Christianity and Judaism could have possibly been well known to the Prophet of Islam is a matter of an argument; it has been long and widely discussed. In fact, the problem has been put forward as '*propinquity*' rather than radical solution. Any, whatsoever, element that could have been or could have probably been identified, ought not to be ignored, that it has passed by transforming the very fervid brain of the Prophet and therefore has had a new form and, often, a new substance. In Nicene *Credo* means consubstantiation, has only an assonance with light upon light of the Koran (XXIV, 35), which is said to connote the luminous omnipresence of God and which has stirred many orthodox believers and redressed aberrant interpretations, such as the prodigy of Jesus the Infant, who plays with Mark to shape birds with clay which then becomes invigorated; a prodigy that we find, as has been absolutely identified, fifty years before A. Grohmann,<sup>20</sup> in which we customarily call today the apocryphal Gospel of St. John in Arabic and within 'the Miracles of Jesus' in Ethiopic, has had in Christianity the only value of a gentile anecdote regarding the apocryphal tradition. Now in two well distinct passages in the Koran (III, 43; V, 110), which we will return to soon, this fact is alluded to in a solid form as an original proof of a thaumaturgical power of God manifested in the hands of Jesus and without referring to Jesus' infancy: «when you were moulding the shape of a bird with mud, with My permission». It is probably interesting to note how, after such a long elapse of time, a typical misinterpretation arises. This time it is from the

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<sup>20</sup> A. Grohmann, *reste einer neuen rezension der kindheitsgeschichte jesu in der ta' amra iyasus, in wiener zeitschrift für die kunde des morgenlandes*, XXVIII, 1914, pp. 1-15.

Christian side. A converted Christian, Saracene<sup>21</sup> was asked to «anathematize the free talk of Muhammed who has said...still a child, that he has moulded birds with mud and blowing on them he rendered them live» which, even if is so, comes back after all to an apocryphal Christian belief.<sup>22</sup>

However, these coinciding elements with Christianity had been given a green light even before earlier epochs regarding the Muslim-Christian polemics and the legends that were looking for the clarification of its origin and its way. Therefore, it is natural enough to think that the responsibility that inspired the Prophet of Islam had passed from one to the other factions that divided Christianity in the Orient: from one fugitive Aryan monk who used to abiding by the rules of Muhammed<sup>23</sup> to the Nestorian monk Bahira, who kept company with the Prophet in the most diffused version.<sup>24</sup> Also because - and this is an important notion for us - whatsoever confrontation with the nascent Islam is done not with the already existing Christianity in general, but with the historical being of Christianity in the Orient at the time of the birth of Islam.

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. J. G. Thilo, *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, Leipzig 1832, t. I, p. 149.

<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, this story of the birds with clay, which has its own long history of transmission from the apocryphal St. John and deriving from the Koran up to the stylish and infatuating literacy transportation of Tharaud brothers (Jerome et Jean Tharaud). *les contes de la vierge*, Paris 1940, p. 258), has had again other unexpected adaptations. In the Ethiopian edition (St. Grebaut. *Les Miracles De Jesus: Texte Ethiopiques Publie Et Traduit In Patrologia Orientalis*, XII, 1919, pp. 625-627) the story is related with the observation of the Sabbath. In Europe, and interestingly in XVII century Samuel Boohart in his *Hierozoicons Sive Bipartitum Sacrae Scripturae*, Frankfurt on Mein 1675, Vol. p. 350), citing the Koranic passages on the miracles of the birds with clay, would add: '*sed has scilicet aves vespertiliones fuisse et jesum christum nihil praeterea creasse dinarunt qui vixerunt post mahometem*' and also al-Qazwini, ad-Damiri, ibn 'Abbas and Wahb ibn Munabbih, who specify the generic *at-Tayr* of the Koran as *al-Khuffash* or *al-Watwat*.

<sup>23</sup> According to chapter 101 attributed to S. John the Damascene (falsely, as has been demonstrated by Armand Abel: *Le Chapitre Cil Du Livre Des Heresis De Jean Damascene: Son Inauthenticite*, In *Studia Islamica*, XIX, Paris 1963, pp. 1-25). The passage on the complicity of the Aryan monk is in P. G. Migne, XCIV, c. 765. Niceta Choniata of the end of XII century (Cf. P. G., Migne, CXL, chapter 105, even if Choniata had had adopted much older sources on his turn.

<sup>24</sup> Cf., for example, various versions of the legend in my own *Libro Della Scala*, the City of the Vatican 1949, p. 405, and 506; and the fundamental collection of A. D'Ancona on the Accident alleged about Muhammed in *Il Tesoro Di Brunetto Versificato*, r. *Accademia Lincei*, 1888, pp. 175-277.

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What were the conditions therefore, which, regarding Christianity, were the historical circumstances of possible contacts with the new religion of Islam? Monophysitism and Nestorianism were both in crises and divided among themselves, as were the adjacent regions of Arabia. More serious, probably, was the crisis that had struck *Nestorianism*<sup>25</sup> in the VI and VII centuries. It depended on three factors that were depressing the organisation: the expanding forces of that church; the internal personal clashes that used to occur umpteen times within the Persian Empire adjacent to the Arabian Peninsula almost regularly and in each and every election of the Catholicon; the struggle between the Nestorian intransigent tendencies. This has been already elaborated upon at the end of the VI century by Henana of the Adiabene who, having accepted the title of Θεοτόκος to the Virgin Mary, used to try approaching the universal Church; and eventually the continuous interference in the affairs of the kings of the Persian Saxons annoyed the church and made it appear abroad as if it were an *instrumentum regni* in the hands of those kings, a very suspicious matter for the Arabs of the north, Mecca, the commercial centre, included, who were in a delicate equilibrium between the Oriental Roman Empire and Persia, both menacing, both potential allies and both in combat with each other, in a cold war as we say today, to gain influence and prestige.

Even different, though critical, was the situation of Monophysitism that was, politically speaking, in a less independent position, because it was hindered in Persia by the sovereign power of the protector of the Nestorians and in combat with the Roman Empire, more or less open, depending on the circumstances, with the Patriarchate and with the government of Constantinople. However domestically, Monophysitism was, in the period concerned, divided more due to

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. regarding all these see E. Tisserant, *L'Eglise Nestorienne*, In *Dictionnaire De Theologie Catholiques*, s. v.

doctrinal divergences and not by Nestorianism itself. As a matter of fact, in the second half of the VI<sup>th</sup> century, two different doctrines had profoundly agitated the Monophysites: the one of John Philipon (dating from Philoposus the Alexandrian argues that human nature is one in itself, does not exist in individual persons and does not have a concrete reality except in this or in that human being; and therefore the divine nature is one, but assumes a reality only in Three Persons so that the divine unity should exist 'not for the number, but because of the identical and invariable condition of the divine'. So was the accusation of *tritheism* against John Philipon and the blitz fight with long polemics against this *tritheistic* doctrine in defence of the unity of God. To this, we can add, about 570, in a book by the same Philipon, another bold doctrine on the final resurrection that<sup>26</sup> destroyed the corporeal matter, would consist of raising new bodies in response to the order of God; and here again another accusation, against the heresiarch of the negation of the resurrection. The controversy against Philipon from Egypt (he was an Alexandrian) had extended in the Assyrian speaking regions where Monophysitism had already been established. Thus, we find it represented in the two types of literature, Greek and Assyrian<sup>27</sup> and there have been long repercussions to this very date because this asserted tritheism has had against it the Coptic and the Ethiopian Monophysite Churches where the nominative *One God* is added when a mention is made of the Three Persons of the Trinity in the sign of the Cross.<sup>28</sup>

Julian of Halicarnas, having taken refuge at Alexandria after 518,

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Jean Maspero, *Histoire Des Patriarches*, Paris 1923, pp. 202-203 and p. 209 (*bibliothèque école hautes études*, sc. history. No. 237).

<sup>27</sup> G. Furlani, *Sei Scritti Anti-Triteistici In Lingua Sirica In Patrologia Orientalis*, xiv, 1920, pp. 675-766.

<sup>28</sup> Also in modern manuals (of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century) for the Ethiopian schools the heresy of Yohannes Ta'aqabi (John Filipon) was cited and found to be repugnant. The Ethiopic Ta'aqabi *attentus*, who accepts three Persons and denies the Unity and adheres to Polytheism. Cf. G. Y. Hailu, *Un Manoscritto Amarico Sulle Verità Della Fede. In Atti Del (I) Convegno Internazionale Di Studi Etiopici, Accademia Linsei*, Rome 1960 pp. 546-547 (and the Ethiopic translation relates the knowledge of the doctrine in question during the Greek influence epoch on Ethiopian literature, namely, in deep Middle Ages).

upheld, seconding the Monophysite doctrine,<sup>29</sup> which, *incorruptibility* in Christ's Body, in the incarnation and in the following unification of the two Natures, was united with the origin of the incorruptibility itself. This proposition in the favour of discussions was already giving a pretext to being interpreted as an attitude of repulsion toward the immunity of the body. This mind-set appeared close to the dualistic version of the doctrinal figure for the *matter*. The discussion took a harsh polemic turn with Sever of Antakya and the accusations of *Manichaeism*, *Docetism* and heresy of *phantasia* types were repeated against Julian of Halicarnas. He always used to be open to attacks and accusations in his answers, more so when his ideas were more accentuated. When the attacks were more accentuated then 'the Meat of Christ was superior to the laws of physics';<sup>30</sup> 'all that of Christ was pre-eminent on our nature';<sup>31</sup> and the question of Sever derived from these very affirmations:

'What death was overcome if nobody had died on the Cross?'<sup>32</sup> Thus, the controversialists who, after Sever, never ceased to refute Julian and insisted above all, on this very point which was to be repeated by Michael of Siris centuries later saying: 'Julian has said that it was an apparent Passion and not real'; 'Julian has said that Jesus had made Passion an appearance according to his will, and he was not suffering'.<sup>33</sup> It was an unending polemic really! In Greek and Assyrian literature, in secular traditions, they had a very vivacious phase when in 565 it appeared that the same Justinian would have been favourable to it; and 195 bishops had held a meeting at Antioch under Patriarch Athanasius to declare their opposition to the doctrine, believed then to be of an 'apparent Passion and

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<sup>29</sup> Regarding the doctrine of Julian of Halicarnas Cf. R. Draguet, *Julien D'halicarnasse Et Sa Controverse Avec Sever D'antioche Sur L'incorruptibilite Du Corps Du Christ*, Louvain 1924. The connection of the Koranic mention of the Crucifix with that of Julian of Halicarnas was a mere intuition, with the usual acumen, according to H. Gregoire (*Mohomet Et Le Monophysisme, Melanges C. Diehl*, Paris 1930, Vol. I, pp. 116-117).

<sup>30</sup> R. Draguet, cit., p. 145, n. 3.

<sup>31</sup> R. Draguet, cit., Wor., p. 145, No. 4

<sup>32</sup> R. Draguet, cit., Wor., p. 164.

<sup>33</sup> R. Draguet, cit., Wor., p. 181



not real'.<sup>34</sup>

Hence, two elements offered by the history of the Monophysite Christianity of Egypt and Syria in the geographic border of Arabia at the commencement of Prophet Muhammed's preaching: the absolute negation of *tritheism* which was polemically attributed to the followers of John Philipon and the polemic against *the only apparent passion*, the polemic attributed to Julian Halicarnas.

Now then, as we have seen, according to the world political status, which has been written down in the two Koranic Suras previously indicated, this historical-religious status of the VI and VII centuries must have its immediate repercussion in the historical interpretation of the Sacred Book of Islam. It is supposed to mean, in my opinion, that this interpretation is not to be looked for directly in the manifestations of the high theological doctrine of Christian and Hebraic writers of the neighbouring regions of Arabia, but rather in those ideas, traditions and stories<sup>35</sup> which with theological and philosophical disputes afoot, could have been popularly achieved within the northern Christians and Judaic surroundings of Arabia. Thus, the historical problem limited, the main polemics of the Oriental Christianity in the initial epoch of Islam would have clear consequences in the same text of the Koran.

The polemic against John Philo, whose Trinitarian doctrine is accused by adversaries under the name *tritheism* and pointed out as a popular execration, explains more straightforwardly, in my judgement, the Koranic verses (IV, 169): «Do not say: *three*. Enough! And it will be better for you»; (V, 77): «Many are who say: 'God is a third of The Three'. There is no God except one only God, and if they do not cease saying such things, a harsh punishment will be the lot of those who

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<sup>34</sup> R. Draguet, cit., Wor., p. 259.

<sup>35</sup> So, beside the story of clay birds, which I have touched upon here above, I will quote the one that alludes to the passage of the Koran (III. 44) 'when they used to draw luck with canes to find out who would be the winner for looking after Mary', the story which can be found in Proto-gospel of Jacob, at least in the Ethiopian version (Cf. M. Chaine, *Apocrypha De Beata Maria Virgine*, Rome 1909, p. 6-7 (transl.), *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, script. *aethiopici*, t. VII). This very identification of diverse sources is a new trend of stories orally diffused among the people.

blaspheme by saying so». It is as well to note that, the conception of the Christian dogma regarding the Trinity as *tritheism* according to the popular idea which accused Philo, was easier to comprehend and refute in bulk and turn what it has inspired rather than the theological doctrine of the Orthodox Christianity. Pushed by this anti-tritheistic position the strict Monotheism of Islam came to be reinforced, and was put in a much simpler and more accessible situation. At the same time, the principles which, though appearing to be trodden down in the popular Christian hatred regarding the false heresy of *Three Gods*, later assumed their own originality with an ulterior negation of the Son.

A popular interpretation, and not a theological one, of Julian of Halicarnas' intense polemic like 'an apparent Passion and not real' leads back, in my opinion, to that famous verse of the Koran (IV, 156) with the sentence *wa-ma salabuhu wa-lakin shubbiha lahum* «they neither crucified Him but they thought it was him»; a phrase which the Occidentals were in the habit of referring to critically whenever they touched upon the doctrine of the *Docents* and *Manicheans*, the same heresies to which the controversialist adversaries of Julian used to refer to the Greek proposition.

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Here, it can again be seen a matter that has started as a solution for a minor historical problem. The very gifted Catalan Orientalist of XIII century, viz. Ramon Marti, collected in his *Pugio Fidei* a set of citations from the medieval Judaic books; the ones that were useful for his demonstration of «*adversus mauros et judaes*». One of these citations, though not specified, is introduced<sup>36</sup> with; «*comprosuerunt ergo librum in quo contra christum talem mentiti sunt fabulam*»; and the story is as follows: at the time of Elans, princess of the Asmons, Jesus of Nazareth comes to Jerusalem. Soon finding the tetragrammaton, he unites the Israelites and gives *the signs* of his being a prophet, first in front of them

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<sup>36</sup> Ramon Marti, *Pugio Fidei Adversus Maurus Et Judaeos*, Leipzig 1687 p. 362.

and then in front of the princess. He heals a cripple and a leper, pronounces the tetragrammaton, resuscitates the dead; and «*faciebant ita homines galileae aves de luto coram eo et ipse decibat: Schemha mephoras super eas et statim illae aves volabant*». Now if this Judaic story is compared with the two Koranic verses: III, 43 and V, 110, we find that the prodigious *signs* of Jesus coincide, with the only difference being the blind (the Koran) substituted by the lame (the Judaic story). This also coincides with the accusation, according to the Judaic story, of the magic use of the tetragrammaton in Jesus' *signs* with the famous verse (V, 110): «when I removed away the Children of Israel from You when You came to them with evident signs and the unbelievers among them said: But this is an evident magic». Here also the memories of the spoken tale seem to be alive, more than the theological and historical notions acquired culturally.

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Thus, the relationships between Islam, Christianity and Judaism come to be historically researched notwithstanding doctrine. The two preceding monotheistic religions could have become popularly noted in the northern Arabian surroundings and, noting what could have been live and polemical then, between the Christian and the Judaic communities in the region of Prophet Muhammed's preaching and therefore accessible in its simple form and actuality. In this historical situation, (political and cultural) Islam rose, and its beginnings came to be therefore appraised and explained in relation to those circumstances that I have tried to summarise. However, one other question, or rather a contrary question is posed regarding this point: in its initial phase during the deep Middle Ages, in what sense did Islam has an influence, as a new religious doctrine, toward the Occident?

The first problem is the one of the eventual connection of the prohibition of the image of Islam with the iconoclast movement at the epoch of the Isaurian emperors. However, this problem, having been put in these conditions, is considered resolved negatively. On the other hand, one can say that, adding the chronology of the Isauris and the iconoclast,

from the autumn of 725 and thereafter, coincides with the one of the Omayyad Caliphs, whom it is difficult to reproach with rigidity in prohibited matters. It would just suffice to cite Qusayr 'Amra regarding art. However, the question might possibly be formulated differently. Pertaining to the connection, Pargoire,<sup>37</sup> for example, has presumed that between the Isauris and the *Manichaeism* or *Paulinism*, though tempting at the first look, has been - I think - eliminated from the rigid norm of Eclogue the Lion III (XVII, 52) who punishes the Manicheans and the Montanists by putting them to death. However, the antipathy or hatred manifested by some trends of Monophysites starting from Philosene of Mabbugh<sup>38</sup> to Sever of Antioch (the adversary of *tritheism* by John Philo) could not have had a great influence, neither directly nor indirectly. It had, by itself and together with other factors, as much on the Islamic prohibition as on the iconoclasm of the Byzantines.

For the Isauris on the other hand, another hypothesis was formulated a decade or so before. The Bulgarian historian N. P. Blagoev, in the introduction of his own edition of Eclogue of the Isaurian Lion, supposed that Muslim jurisprudence has had an influence on the compilation of Eclogue norms.<sup>39</sup> About this subject we can now say that the first dubious point is that of Eclogue's chronology which, having emanated in the name of Lion III and Constantine V, is to say the very least uncertain and had been variously between 725 to 741; (This last date is the one preferred by Blagoev);<sup>40</sup> and though not certain, that the elaboration of the Muslim jurisprudence up to that year had been so as to allow an irradiation in the Byzantine world. However, the reference made

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<sup>37</sup> J. Pargoire, *L'église Byzantine De 527 to 847*, Paris 1905, pp. 253-254.

<sup>38</sup> Regarding Philossen of Mabbugh there is proof, at least passionately contrary, the one that of Tecfane (chronographia, ed. Bonn 1841, Vol. I. pp. 206-207. sub anno 5982 of the Creation = 482 AD). Sever of Antioch Epifan the Monk said to II Nicene Council. Cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova Et Amplissima Collectio*, Florence 1767, Vol. XIII, c. 253; and ibidem, c. 317.

<sup>39</sup> N. P. Blagoev, *Ekloga*, Sofia 1932 (Universitetska Biblioteka No. 122), pp. 25-26. I owe the translation of these pieces of Blagoev's works to Prof. Picchio of the Institute of Slav Philology of the University of Rome, whom I whole heartedly thank.

<sup>40</sup> N. P. Blagoev, cit., *Wor.*, p. 19-2041 X,

by the Bulgarian scholar regarding the penal code is worth evaluating in relation to the system of the penal Muslim jurisprudence which is founded on two concepts: the one of mitigation, in an evolutionary sense, of the personal vendetta, which is limited and put into a concrete form by a fixed rule once and for all; and the one of the coexistence of punishment compulsorily set by the religion according to the Koranic Revelation and other punishments to be fixed by the judge as an arbitrator. Needless to say, these two concepts are foreign to the post-Julian jurisprudence that is represented by Isauris' Eclogue. A further historical research on the hypothesis presented by Blagoev seems to have been made not on contacts of the two jurisprudences within the system, but on the eventual infiltrations of single norms, be it penal or civil.<sup>41</sup>

One other problem, historically subsequent, is the eventual repercussion regarding the serious dispute that raged within Islam in the IX century between the *Mu'tazila* and their orthodox adversaries. The answer is positive here; it has already been demonstrated elsewhere how the controversy about the increase or created divine law could have passed from Islam to Judaism when we refer to the discussion between the Qaraits and the anti-Qaraits of the same IX century and through Sever of Ashmunayn, to the Egyptian Christianity and in the end to Ethiopia, where it had ended with the formation of the proposition of the Arc of Alliance created *ante saecula* and identified with Mary "chosen before the creation of the world" and whom 'the sun and the moon had not preceded'.<sup>42</sup> I will

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<sup>41</sup> N. P. Blagoev, he moreover hints (cit., Wor. p. I, in a passage to which my attention was brought by Prof. Picchio) that the *Ecloga Ad Prochiron Mutata*, composed between 960 and 1166 had had Prochiron of Basil Macedonian as its front piece or rather the famous epitome, such as, *epitome legum* - in addition to the other *Fonte Ignota*, *Certamente Di Origine Musulmana*. Now we know (cr. K. E. Zachariae Von Lingenthal, *Geschichte Des Griechisch-Romischen Rechts*, Berlin 1892, pp. 35-36) that the *Ecloga Ad Prochiron Mutata* had been used in the southern Italy under the Norman dominion. So we would have, by dint of an ascertained hypothesis, a partial influence of the Muslim jurisprudence which, according to the Byzantine thoughts, would have reentered the Two Sicilies. [Regarding a different hypothesis see A. D'Emilia, *Il Diritto Bizantino Nell'Italia Meridionale, In Atti Del Convegno Internazionale; L'Oriente Cristiano Nella Storia Della Civiltà*, Rome 1964, pp. 367-368].

<sup>42</sup> Cf. hereunder, pp. 61-62.

now add how typical the alterations, often summary, of this reciprocal knowledge are. Bartolommeo of Edessa, who used to always write (in Greek) in the same IX century, reproached the Muslims «specially for what you say in the Koran that Muhammed was created *ante saecula*,<sup>43</sup> while going back to the increate, he attributed it to the Koran correctly, although still identifying it with Logos.<sup>44</sup>

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In those circumstances, of religious history as well as cultural and political, of the deep Middle Ages, so Islam rose and thus started that osmosis of thought, of economy, of science between the Empire of the Arabs and the medieval European world. The tradition of Spoleto Congress has defined the exposition of this period of the century in its argument. Those exchanges of notes would remain an inactive barter, but are animated in fields, that are more diverse as much as they are in this first phase. When such a phase came to a close, a new school of thought was on the threshold of burgeoning; and a little after 1230 the enthusiastic cry of Bacon Roger came to announce it: «*Nunc magnificata est philosophia Aristotelis apud latinos*» really opened the way in which St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas strengthened these new philosophical thoughts of the western world. Also, because of the Avicenna schemata solidified verbatim for more than two centuries after the Florentine Renaissance, or for the sake of achieving a different solution, Marcellus Ficinus and Laurence the Great would be still adopting them: as in Giorgione's chart, the old philosopher and the Christian philosopher lift the Arab philosopher above themselves to denote the noble Arab contribution for the evolution of the human thoughts.

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<sup>43</sup> P. G. Migne, 104, c.1392.

<sup>44</sup> P. G. Migne, 104, c. 1409.

## 2. *THE SEAWAY TO THE INDIES IN HISTORY AND IN THE MEDIEVAL JURISPRUDENCE*<sup>+</sup>

I should say that there are some privileged cases: because they are presented and represented in successive phases of history, albeit diverse, but identical in substance. These are the almost imposed passages of the afflicted vicissitudes of man. The one that excels amongst them is the seaway to the Indies. The sea-way to the Indies, namely the transit from Europe - particularly from the Mediterranean regions and along the Atlantic coast - to the Indian sub-continent, had, during centuries rather than millennium, been a constant problem, economic, cultural, social and, therefore, political, influencing the evolution of the human history often and decidedly.

This problem had its own initial geographical centre in the Mediterranean areas. The initial date is taken from Alexander the Great who vied for the maritime routes to the Indies with the continental one, to the epoch of Augustus' Empire and to the dawn of the Modern era. Then the initiatives of Henry the Sailor and the voyage of Vasco da Gama interrupted this Mediterranean taking for one and a half centuries until restored at last by the opening of the Suez isthmus in 1869. Now, starting from the Second World War, we are faced with a new change; air navigation. Progress had already diminished the cost of Suez-Red Sea transit. Nuclear energy, missiles and the imminent navigation of the space are destined to push back, into the pages of history, what had been, including host of events regarding the question of 'the way to the Indies', up to the start of the Nineteenth century. Therefore, we ought to consider this point just as any other historical event, through the point of view of modern realities that is being rapidly transformed by the force of progress in modern technology. Just looking at the long struggles which were in

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<sup>+</sup> [A Report to the International Congress for the History of Navigation, September 1962 (unpublished)].

progress around the Mediterranean Basin, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean with eyes that can evaluate the future, at least the trips through the solar system can really judge those old rivalries of ‘insensible troubles suffered by the mortal souls’.

However, if the vision of history as a unitary event of humanity is imposed on us today, we should not forget that this current stage is rather a premise of an unforeseen evolution that is destined to come rather than the outcome of various and successive stoppages that had paved the way for and aptly explained it. So, let us return to the past, especially to the history of the Middle Ages in which this account of mine is inferring.

In their initial phase, the deep Middle Ages obviously inherited the data of a pregnant situation during the imperial period. At the beginning, the conflict between the maritime route to the Indies (from Alexandria across the Red Sea) and the land route (from Syria across Mesopotamia) had started to coincide with the rivalry between Lagidis’ Egypt and Seleucids’ Syria. Later, the Roman Empire, having succeeded the Lagidis in Egypt, would dominate the maritime route, while the Persian Empire under Arsacids, (and later under the Sassanian dynasty), would protect the routes on land. Therefore, the relationship between Rome and Persia, would still have this important field of reciprocal competition, which - as just related - gets lengthened at the start of the Middle Ages when Bisansius succeeds in Rome as the centre of the Oriental Empire.

These two routes to the Indies were the means of communication between the western world and China: direct communication by land to Persia and to Central Asia; indirect maritime communication through which Chinese goods were bartered in the Indian ports. Now, I would like to ask, “What was the social and juridical organisation which the sea-way to the Indies had changed at the start of the Middle Ages, and therefore represents this route in the history of the Medieval jurisdiction, and above all the one of the Orient?” It might be as well to mention the juridical



situation that had already been formulated in olden times and in the same regions. I have examined the main elements<sup>1</sup> elsewhere. Along the Red Sea, to the south of Egypt and the Arab Peninsula, the Roman Empire did not have a programme of conquest and, among others, the expeditions of Petronius to Nubia and Ellius Galerius to Northern Arabia did not have happy endings, and were without any sequence.

On the maritime route, with more frequent movement to the African coast, *stations* used to guarantee the landing-places while enjoying the benefits of navigation. Sailors necessarily piloted for coastal stoppages, for the purpose of bartering with the local African and Asiatic merchants, all in preparation for major traffic with far-away India. Now these stations, or rather in Greek *exporia* are mentioned simply with the qualitative Greek names. I have explained elsewhere that such a distinction seems to correspond to that of the landing-places, and therefore unchangingly commercial. They came to be regulated by pacts struck with the local powers and are therefore called *emporia nomima*. The landing-places and establishments which lacked specific agreements, used to apply only *jus gentium* seconded, by the collateral of imperial prestige. Therefore, within these emporia provincial merchants established themselves, and lived by their gains from the landing-place traffic. That they were mainly of Egyptian origin or from the oriental provinces of the Empire has been proved by the fact that, along the African coast, the predominant influence had for centuries been Greek culture. Greek had been the second language in Ethiopia, as testified by Greek inscriptions, by bilingual Ethiopia and by the very first translations of Christian literary works in Ethiopia that had been taken from Greek texts.

The *emporia* along the maritime course were not subjected to the sovereignty of the Empire but were still a part of the Asiatic and African principalities in whose territory they existed. Nevertheless, in a Greek inscription (C.I.G. 5075) an Apollyon has the title of 'the preceptor of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Punti Di Vista Sulla Storia Dell'etiopia*, In *Atti Del[II] Convegno Internazionale Di Studi Etiopici*, Accademia Dei Lincei, Roma 1960, pp. 12-21.

Red Sea' and more specifically a famous passage by Pliny attests to the tax collection by a certain *vectigal* for the benefit of the Empire along the coasts of the Red Sea. We are not obviously dealing here with an Egyptian territory, but with the northern Red Sea, the emporia area. The ship of Annius Plocamus, the tax-collector, was blown by a tempest along the width of the Indian Ocean as far as the landing-place in Ceylon for fifteen days: the incomprehensible fact was that it had been drifted to the north of the Red Sea.

By whom could this *vectigal* be collected? We do know, from Plinius and from the Greek inscription, that a *vectigal*, or more precisely a *portorium* was collected in Leuke Kome's landing-place in Nabatea's territory which was not subject to Roman sovereignty; and the Periplus of the Eritrean Sea confirms the fact that, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, the very same landing-place had been there for centuries with its own soldiers for the collection of tributes. While the collection of this tribute, whilst navigating in a non-imperial port, seemed unpalatable from a juridical point of view; later, the same Mommsen supposed that the tribute was collected, not for Rome, but on behalf of the prince of Nabataea. The same difficulty is supposed to have faced the *stations* in the lower Red Sea areas, referred to in the passage by Polonius regarding the tax gatherer Annius Plocamius. However, according to Leuke Kome, it was thought that the collection of *vectigal* corresponded to the affirmation of Roman sovereignty upon Nabat from the beginning of Augustus' epoch; such a hypothesis is improbable regarding the ports of the Red Sea from Adulis and further on. Personally, I would not even hypothesise about well-defined Roman sovereignty, even when the tribute from the navigation route and the trade with the Indies had been the result of this more or less direct influence. The system the Empire exercised on local powers along the maritime way en route to the Indies and paralleled by the Greco-Roman mercantile in those landing-places were that of tutelary communities with Imperial Prestige vis-à-vis African and Arab princes who were defended against any piracy by the Roman fleet, stationed in the Red Sea.

On the other hand, this extraordinary character of *stations* along the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, during the classical epoch, (an institution extremely flexible in its elements and therefore suitable for various situations), was not used to excluding the authority of the local princes. And, we know from the ecclesiastical history of Rufinus that, in the middle of the IV century, in the Constantinian epoch, the Apostle of Ethiopia St. Frumentius, had started his homilies after having requested and obtained from the Ethiopian Monarch the authorisation for the Greco-Roman merchants of Adulis station to be able to publicly celebrate the Christian rites, the new religion adopted by them. The authorisation, therefore, depended on the local Monarch. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the other possible solution: that is to say, the distinction touched upon between the conventional and the non-qualified landing-places, which coincides with tax-collection or exemption from the payment of vectigal to the Roman State. Therefore, in the conventional landing-places there was a regime analogous to settlements of the contemporary epoch in Asiatic countries. There will be some examples regarding the application of these bodies of law, promoted by the constant circumstances of the traffic in the Orient, later.

Such a method of organising posts of call continued even after the Constantinian period, in the deep Middle Ages, in the Byzantine epoch, and as we have seen, the link with the Oriental Empire is more or less affirmed. Accordingly, the Empire had to make its prestige respected. Thus, Costansius would haughtily write to brother-kings 'Ezana and Shey'azana', who ruled jointly in Axum, not giving them regal title, but rather that of a title Ezana ascribes to himself in his inscriptions. In the meantime, addressing them with the simple vocative term, the title of being reserved, in the protocol of the Imperial Court only to the Byzantine and the Persian emperors. Instead, about two centuries later, Justin I would take the opportunity of sending an ambassador to the Red Sea for the purpose of persuading Ethiopian navigators to block Persian purchases by offering the highest prices in the market of Ceylon, which had become - as we will see - the emporium for exchanges with China. Conversely,

obstacles were asserted from the Persian side - through the Nestorian Christian ecclesiastic hierarchy - with the Christian communities having established themselves in Ceylon and on the Island of Socotra, as has been attested by Cosma Indicopleuste while narrating his own trip accomplished in 525. So, once again during the strong reign of Justin I and Justinian, in relationship with the Persian activities: the Byzantine backing to the Ethiopian invasion of Yemen; the following desertion of the Ethiopian commander and the governor of the occupied Yemen - a rebellion which has, as attested to us by Procopius as a link with the Greco-Roman communities of Adulis - and at last in 572 the Persian occupation of Yemen which seems to have closed the sea-way of the Red Sea to the Indies, at least rendering it secondary to the one on land which was frequented by camel-drivers, and was traditionally favoured and controlled by the Persians. It is however typical that, in the anecdote narrated by Indicopleuste regarding the encounter of the Persian with the merchant Sopatron of Adulis in front of the king of Ceylon, the king apostrophises the Adulisian merchant calling him 'You, Roman' circumstantial evidence, though vague, of a bond existing between the communities along the Red Sea and the Byzantine Empire.

This first medieval period came to a close with the Arab conquest of Egypt and the establishment of the Arab Empire of the Caliphs, producing a great historical upheaval in the Orient as well as in the Occident. It also changed the conditions for the sea-way to the Indies that had continued from Ptolemy up to the days of Heraclius' Empire. Thus ended the regime of the stations, a Greco-Roman mercantile in the African and Asian territory; and thereafter, new establishments and a new regime arose. However, that juridical and political condition had already strongly acted on the countries of the Orient beyond the traffic field, and would leave lasting marks: not only regarding the influence of Greek culture along the Sea-ways to the Indies, but also of the diffusion of Christianity which had been initiated from the base paved by the mercantile communities which were in daily contact with the local population. The diffusion of Christianity intensified more when the theological conflicts

from the IV<sup>th</sup> century onwards succeeded in making the stations along the seaway to the Indies possible refuges for the dissident Christians who fled from the Byzantine orthodoxy: hence, the Monophysites to Ethiopia and the Nestorians to Socotra and Ceylon, on the Malabar coast. This was not the end if it is considered that the Christian communities in the Arab Peninsula, who played their own part in providing their arguments, traditions and achievements, had achieved their values in the first rise of Islam. Scrutinising now, beyond any juridical parsing, the nutshell of this phase of the question of the 'sea-way to the Indies' and its place in the overall historical vicissitudes, we see the reciprocal position of the two Empires-Byzantine and Persian - along the sea-way to the Indies. They had serious consequences in the relationship between Europe and China: Byzantium impedes a Persian expansion toward the Mediterranean Sea, by force of arms, just as it did during Heraclius' reign. Likewise, the Mediterranean end of the land route to India and China came to be cut off from the Persian dominion. Persia restricted every Roman advance, and later in the Byzantine, along any passage of land to India and China. Therefore, the Roman Oriental Empire felt the burden of defending - with the Persian adversary at the rear- against a continuous threat of barbaric invasion in Europe. Persia defended its northern frontiers - with the Byzantine enemy at the rear - against the threats of waves of invasions by Turks and the Mongols of Central Asia, the *Turans* of the Persian epoch whose cruel princess *Turandokht*, the daughter of Turan - was many centuries later to enter European art thanks to the works of our Venetian Carlo Gozzi.

It follows that the two Empires, though confronting each other, played a historical role, by delaying the burgeoning of new peoples in the cradle of Mediterranean civilisation.

The fighting continued, politically and militarily, in various territories. Byzantium was trying to assure positions as much as Persia along the route to Central Asia - such as the embassy of the Turkish prince Istami to Justin II in 568 with a proposition of an alliance together with an offer of commercial right with China. Thereafter, Persia had to intervene

along the maritime course to spite the Byzantine allies, as it did in the Red Sea against the Axumite during the conquest of Yemen in 572.

It is obvious indeed that the long rivalry between Byzantium and Persia weakened both parties and facilitated the rise of a new empire, the Arab one, with the latter's conquest, which ought to have made a new contribution to human civilisation in the territories conquered by and against both ancient colossi.

Therefore, the rise of Islam in the VII<sup>th</sup> century and the rapid establishment of the Empire of the Caliphs preceding the conquest of Egypt and the Asia modified the situation radically. The Roman Oriental Empire and the Persian Empire now disappeared from the Red Sea region.

The traffic route from the Mediterranean Sea to the Middle and Far East would not pass by Alexandria of Egypt anymore, but would follow the Damascus - Baghdad caravan route.

Not only the ports of the Red Sea, but also the ones on the Persian Gulf would be the initial landing-places for navigation to the Indies. The port of Basra accentuated the oriental legends of 'the Wonders of the Indies'; and from this very Basra, Sindbad the Sailor would set out on his fantastic adventures; after which his tales would be included in 'The Thousand and One Nights'.

The Persian Gulf, with its own history and its own old and new stories, superseded the Red Sea by dint of its connections with the Indian world.

On the Red Sea, the police action of the Empire of the Caliphs' sufficed against piracy; and the occupation of the Dahlak Islands vis-à-vis Massaua, already an accomplished fact under the first Omayyad Caliphs locally assured a control point for the guardianship for the local navigation.

This total historical upheaval also had its juridical rules for navigation, such as the one that appeared in the classical age and during the sovereignty of the oriental Roman Empire over Egypt. The same occupation of the Dahlak Islands, near Massaua, is one of its first signs. The Dahlak group of islets were soon to be used as a border spot and these

islands, under the direct dominion of the Caliphate had come under the sovereignty of a local Muslim prince who had to accept or reject a role of vassalage to the Christian Ethiopian state, as attested to by al-Ya'qubi who wrote in 892 AD. In fact, the characteristic of the action taken by the Muslim Empire in substituting the Oriental Roman Empire would be, at least in the initial period and in comparison with the old sea-way to the Indies through the Red Sea, the substitution of the Greco-Roman regime's stations or settlements and the occupation of coastal ports suitable for traffic; hence the affirmation and the diffusion of Islam in Eastern Africa.

However, the crisis and the subsequent flaking of the Empire of the Caliphs brought as a consequence, as seen regarding Dahlak, the establishment of local African principalities, which - with the now restricted traffic on the Indian route - were induced to expand toward the internal regions of the continent. Therefore, in this second period of the history of the continent, there are two thrust analogies for an analogous cause: the Muslim occupation of the coast and the decline of maritime commerce forcing the Christian State of Ethiopia to look for an alternative expansion toward the interior of the Ethiopian highlands against the African tribes that were occupying them. On the other hand, the same dearth of maritime traffic and the independence of the Muslim principalities in the Eastern coast of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden incited the Sultans and the Emirs of that coast also toward the internal regions of the highland and ended with the establishment of a series of local Muslim minute states, in the valleys of Hawash, Juba and that of Webi, the minute states which would block the south in the face of the Christian Ethiopian Kingdom's expansion. This lays the historical premise of the language, the age-old struggle of the Ethiopian Christians against the Muslims, which had multiple consequences in Africa and in Europe itself where the Ethiopian monarch had legendarily appeared from the XIV<sup>th</sup> century as Prester John, the champion of Christianity and the very powerful ally of the Western powers against the Muslim threat.

Therefore, this is the physiognomy of the countries of the Red Sea in the VII<sup>th</sup> to the XIX<sup>th</sup> centuries, the new maritime route from the

Persian Gulf to India and China assumed a different and a various aspect. This period of splendour of the Caliphate is indeed the prolongation of the maritime traffic from India toward China, certainly in competition if not actually substitution, with the old caravan-route which crossed from Northern Persia and Turkistan in Sinkiang to reach Chinese territory. Let us see the succinct analysis of what the documents relate regarding this traffic. Above all, the two main points of departure were both on the Persian Gulf: Basra and Oman. Basra, at the end of the Gulf and at the outlet of the Tigris, had the advantage of being the natural mouth at the Sea of Baghdad [sic], the Imperial capital of the caliphate. Al-Ya'qubi, who wrote between 889 and 905 AD, calls Basra 'the first city of the world, a commercial centre and rich par excellence'.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Ya'qubi,<sup>3</sup> writing just before 1120 with al-Gayhani as a source, regarding the first half of the ninth century, attested that the Arab merchants in China originated from Basra, and the Persian *Hudud al-'Alam*, written in 982 AD recorded the riches of and the privileged fiscal regime established at Basra.<sup>4</sup> At the outlet of the Persian Gulf and on the opposite shore of the Arab Peninsula, 'Oman was the second centre of the Maritime traffic. The same author of *Hudud Al 'Alam* would say that Oman was 'the emporium of the whole world'. There was no city in existence where merchants were richer and where all the goods of the North, South, East and West were brought to be marketed in different counties.

Not only this, but in the XII<sup>th</sup> century, al-Idrisi, in *Libro Del Re Ruggero*, written to the Bailey of the Norman King of Sicily, declared that in Daybul, the port of Sind near the present town of Karachi, «the ships of the seamen of 'Oman arrive with their merchandise and their products»

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<sup>2</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, *Les Pays*, tr. of G. Wiet, Cairo 1937, p. 167,

<sup>3</sup> Sharaf al-Zaman Tahir Marwazi, on *China, The Turk And India*, Ed. by V. Minorsky, London 1942; pp. 23-25 and p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> *Hudud al-'Alam, The Regions of The World*, tr. by V. Minorsky, London 1937, p. 148.



for the benefit of exchange in that great emporium on their way to India.<sup>5</sup>

To that effect also, al-Ya'qubi in the X<sup>th</sup> century noted that the import trade of Indian amber was concentrated in 'Oman.<sup>6</sup>

And ibn Khurdadbeh, writing between 846 and 889, told of loading of goods, on ships that left the outlet of Shat al-'Arab, of which he said,<sup>7</sup> the right bank is Arabian and the left one Persian. Siraf, in fact, was the port that vied with the Arabian Basra. Suleiman too, in 851, recorded the exchanges with the Chinese ships in Siraf where they loaded goods brought from Basra and 'Oman.

Moreover, in 951, al-Istakhri,<sup>8</sup> calls the peoples of the *great city* of Siraf «the masters of the trade of the region, and of the interior of the Ocean». However, this position came to a decline first with the occupation of Siraf by the Buyid princes in 933 and then due to the earthquake in 977. In testimony of the prosperity and the multiple directions of traffic of that port to date, the seamen of Merca, in Somalia, bear the name Sirafi and take pride in their origin from that medieval landing-place.

Now what was the legal system of this trade from the Persian Gulf toward India and China? Regarding the departure point, we know that Basra used to pay a tithe to the imperial treasury of Baghdad. Pertaining to India *Libro Del Re Ruggero* describes in the afore-mentioned port of Daybul, the marketing of goods between Arab exporters and Indians as well as with Chinese importers. The exchange occurred, according to al-Idrisi's testimony, globally in the sense that local traders bought the load of a ship as a whole after which they stowed it in their respective stores. Only after the departure of the ships of individual importers, did the Indian merchants withdraw the stocks of merchandise from the stores and sell them locally or market them in various territories by caravan. It is

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<sup>5</sup> *India And The Neighbouring Countries in The Kitab Nuzhat al-Idrisi*, ed. S. Maqbul Leida 1960, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, cit., Wor., p. 238.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh *Kitab al-Masalik Wa'l-Mamalik*, Ed. De Goeje, Leida 1889, p. 60 (text), p. 40 (transl.).

<sup>8</sup> Al-Istakhri, *Viae Regnorum*, ed. De Goeje, Leida 1870, p. 154.

understood that this system of global purchase of a load benefitted commercial operations by rendering more elasticity to imports by sea.

And what about China? Here we have the evidence of al-Marwazi. The emporium, where the incoming ships from the Persian Gulf were admitted was a Canton ‘a great port on a great river’, evidence that has been confirmed by ibn Khurdadbeh who called Canton ‘the most considerable post of call of China’. The foreign traders had the concession of staying on one of the shores of Sikiang, the opposite region to the town of Canton where the Chinese merchants were. Owing to this concession, the Arab and the Persian merchants received their merchandise from their respective ships, from Basra for the Arabs, and Siraf for the Persians. This traffic was tuned in by a high functionary of the Chinese Empire who oversaw and kept an eye on all commercial operations on both banks of the river. Upon arrival of a given ship, be it Arab or Persian, the Chinese officials, or their delegates, registered all foreigners on board: the captain, the crew and the passengers and conducted a detailed inventory of the ship’s cargo. Then, after having exhausted the operations, the foreign importers were allowed to make for their allotted areas on the left-hand side of Sikiang. Thereafter, an audience by the Lord of Canton awaited them. He then entrusted them to a functionary who bore the title, *Fanchang*, transcribed in Arabic as *fasan*. This person oversaw the unloading of goods that were then deposited in a store, where they were not supposed to be sold during the whole period of the south-west monsoon that was favourable for Chinese navigation. Only when the monsoon abated and the arrival of other ships owned by importers from the Sea-ways of the Indies was probable, officials would allow the merchants to withdraw their merchandise from the stores and put it on sale; after having paid the Chinese treasury customs dues of 30% ad valorem (but 10% on pearls and on camphor, as Chinese sources attest). The same Chinese sources would later attest that the withdrawal of goods from the deposit store earlier than the named time and therefore before the defrayal of import customs dues was penalised with a total confiscation of the merchandise. This system of contemporary sale of all imported goods,

in one single season says al-Marwazi, had the aim of maintaining one price for each article or at least the competition during the traffic season. Thus, there were two different systems: the Indian type contract of sale en bloc of all the cargo of a ship owned by the importers and the Chinese type contract of sale en bloc of all the goods imported in one season, and deposited in stores. Both systems facilitated the operation of retail traders in local business dealings, and both parties acquiesced to the practice of accepting importation from the West through a few *open ports*, in which local trade had its own base for marketing. However, the current system in Canton certainly favoured the stay of sailors and foreign traders in reserved quarters for importers outside the Chinese town, while in the Indian port, the purchase and the marketing of the cargo did not require residence of non-Indian merchants on land. Thus, the Chinese emperor would later name a Muslim with administrative powers for the Muslim community on the left bank of Sikiang and made a decree regarding the inheritance of the western traders who died in the Chinese territory. The medieval settlement in Canton was, therefore, without restrictions, a territory under Chinese authority but inhabited by the non-Chinese. It is also interesting to note, from an economic history point of view, that China was forced to apply severe measures that culminated in the imperial edict of 1219 for limiting and then impeding the export of Chinese metallic currency, an act particularly practised by merchants coming by sea through the Indian Ocean. This explains the frequent discoveries of medieval Chinese coins in various parts of the Indian Ocean basin.

Nevertheless, the deviation of the hub of maritime traffic from the Persian Gulf towards Middle and Far Asia transformed but did not annul the Red Sea traffic. One could go, in fact, from the Persian Gulf on a westerly bearing towards the countries of the Red Sea and pass by the African coast of the Indian Ocean, not to reach the Mediterranean Sea, but to convoy from there to the landing stages of the Persian Gulf with precious African goods which were then be sent to the Asiatic countries of

India and China. That is what ibn Khurdadhbēh reported regarding the outlet of the Tigris was toward Zanzibar or Ethiopia.<sup>9</sup> So between 889 and 905, al-Ya'qubi recorded the trade of grey amber brought from the coast of Zengis to Aden; and in 982, the author of *Hudud Al 'Alam* noted how the traders of 'Oman and Bahrain used to frequent the landing-stages of Ethiopia. Regarding Chinese ships, he continued, they pushed on to the western sector and to the Indian Ocean, and at the end of the IX century al-Ya'qubi pinpoints it as Eden. Once more ibn Khurdadhbēh tells us that, besides the goods imported by the Jewish traders of the Mediterranean Sea to Basra, this trade would follow another seaway of the Red Sea.

Why was it then that in this traffic of the Persian Gulf only the Arabs and the Persians did not participate? As a matter of fact, ibn Khurdadhbēh who wrote between 846 and 889 as already mentioned, attested to the fact that the Jewish traders, so-called *Radhaniyyah*, leave the west with their goods, (brocades, fur coats and slaves), and having reached the mouth of the Orontes on the Syrian coast and passing through Antioch and Baghdad, they reached Basra from where their merchandise was shipped to India and China.<sup>10</sup>

Briefly, this was the state of maritime traffic in the Indian Ocean from the IX to the XIII centuries, when in the second half of the thirteenth century, two new events modified the course: the fall of the Caliphate and the conquest of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1274 and the rise in Egypt of a strong Bahrite Mameluke monarchy under the energetic Sultan Baybars. The Damascus-Baghdad route thus lost its supremacy and became insecure whilst an active Egyptian policy gave the Red Sea back its supremacy for maritime traffic. The northern land route which reached Northern Persia at Tabriz and thence to Turkestan would assume a particular importance. As Marco Polo passed through there so would Missionaries who would activate contacts with the new Mongol Empire. The sea-way on the Red Sea would instead be the subject of Egyptian

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<sup>9</sup> Ibn Khurdadhbēh, cit., Wor. Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Khurdadhbēh, cit., Wor. p. 153 (text), p. 114 (transl.).

politics in Genoa with the commercial treaty of 1290, after which an increase in the numbers of Genovese traders in the Nile Valley would follow, and because of that, in 1321 Jordan Catalan, who had the Genovese Lanfrankin Gatouoche with him, wrote '*A nostris mercatoribus latinis intellexi quod via Ethiopiae est aperta cui vellet ire*'. However, the bishop of Antivary, William Adam, in 1317, in his *De Modo Saraceenos Extirpandi*, hurled himself against the Genovese intervention and suggested an action against Aden; therefore, blocking the traffic between Egypt and India.

At Genoa, however, Venice successfully appeared on the scene and the seaway through the Red Sea remained open up to the end of the middle Ages the *Iter De Venetis Ad Indiam*. The independence of Egypt and a good relationship with the Egyptian State would be a fundamental point for Venetian power games.

Nevertheless, besides the Mediterranean-India sea-way in this epoch of the Middle Ages, the trade through the Indian Ocean from Asian shores to East African ones still had to be considered, as well as communication between India and the south-east of Asia. The historical consequences of this maritime traffic are various and naturally follow the rhythmic course of the monsoons.

Above all, the presence of the Persian community along the East African coast and hence the artistic influence of southern Persia on monuments which, particularly from the XII<sup>th</sup> to the XIV<sup>th</sup> century, started to mushroom in the expanding African towns in that sector was felt.

Further, to the south, the domination of the Hova group on Madagascar Island and the appurtenance of Malagasy to the Malayan-Indonesian group of languages according to results amassed today from studies, rather than an affinity with spoken tongues in a literal area, shows that it belonged to the language spoken in the Philippines rather than that in the Indonesian archipelago. However, ethnologically, there is a connection between East African technical language with that of the Pacific, for example, fishing for tortoise with a remora and the pirogue with double outriggers.

And owing to the frequent relationships along the monsoon seaways, the diffused notion in the Medieval geography regarding the contiguity between India and East Africa also became strengthened; till Fra Mauro, the celebrated Cartographer of Serenissima, painted one canal only *el Cavo de Diab*, between the Laccadive Islands and Somalia.

What characterised the legal system which replaced this development of traffic between Asia and Africa on the Indian Ocean? I believe one can find it in the *Bandar* body of law. The Persian word *Bandar* which means port has also been adopted by Arabic and other spoken languages along the Indian Ocean but with a special meaning. In the landing-stages along the great maritime ways, a commercial centre was established - the Bandar - which was topographically situated on the side of a local town or a village and which was inhabited by foreign traders who bought goods imported from overseas and then found markets for them in other regions, often with the collaboration of commercial caravans.

Therefore, that is not all that, far away from situations seen in China, in the Canton emporium, on Sikiang. But in Bandar the evolution was different, because in some regions of the Indian Ocean, there was a chief who had the title *Shah-e-Bandar*, as has been attested in 1355 in Colombo of Travancore, of southern India, and then in the peninsula of Malacca. The *Shah-e-Bandar*, who was one of the merchants, administered the quarter with a police officer's function, though still answerable to the local prince, at least formally. However, these powers of his were more or less strongly exercised, according to the decline or progress of authority of the local monarch. Thus, the *Shah-e-Bandar* was taken to be the figure who represented the interests of foreign merchants before the monarch of the region or could be employed by a local official who administered justice in Bandar directly in the name of the monarch of the country. In the contrary sense the Bandar could, in different political circumstances, readily transform itself into the possession of a faraway prince from whose territory the merchants mostly came, proper foreign *enclave* in the country, such formation, for example, like the ones in Asia

and Africa during the evolution of maritime trade in 'Oman.

Still earlier in the affirmation of sovereignty of 'Oman, another development verified itself on the African coast of the Indian Ocean: the Bandar of the Arab and Persian merchants, which, compared to the local population of black farmers and nomadic shepherds, represented with prestige a much higher culture, and ended up by becoming a city-state; a real power in the Indian Ocean, and which offered useful comparisons in the history of jurisdiction. It was set up by a board of elders that represented, in various factions, the different groups of merchants living there. Each faction retained a memory of its Asiatic homeland as well as its genealogy that bound it to its ancestral land which was by now far away. One or other faction acquired special power within this city-state, as was the case of the Qahtanites who had the privilege of producing *Qadis* (Muslim judges) in the Bandar of Mogadishu, i.e. an official of the State.<sup>11</sup> Still in the second half of the XIII century this type of Bandar comes to be affirmed; but local events in Mogadishu meant a substitution by a Board of elders, (it thus remained in other places, such as in Merca and Brava), to a hereditary principedom. The Bandar in Arabic thus had a prince who assumed the title of Sultan and who reigned as Sovereign within the wall, a frontier with a proper African territory. However, the power of the city-state was still limited due to privileges enjoyed by individual merchants: privileges, for instance, still found from the deep Middle Ages to the start of this century when the Italian administration in Somalia commenced.

Thus, the tiny state having been formed, it had the function of a tutelary for landing stages along the maritime route from the Persian Gulf to East Africa and for the administration of sales in the market to the town's people.

To gather the characteristics of this system in Bandar succinctly, let us read from the Moroccan traveller ibn Battuta of his arrival at Mogadishu in 1330.<sup>12</sup> "It is the custom of the people of this town that when

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. my book *Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, Vol. I. Rome 1957, pp. 14-24.

<sup>12</sup> *The Travels of Battuta* transl. H. A. R. Gibb Vol. II. Cambridge 1962 pp. 373-378.

a ship comes to cast anchor, the *sambuks*, which are small boats, start to accost it. In each *sambuk* is found a group of young townspeople. Each of them carries a covered tray containing food and presents it to one of the traders saying, 'This is my guest'. Having disembarked, the trader goes to the house of his host only, except for those who had already been to the town before and had acquaintances among the inhabitants. While the trader sojourns with his host, the latter sells the merchandise for him and buys on his behalf, and if somebody buys from the trader, in the absence of the host, any goods at a very low price or sells to him at a very high price; this type of a contract of sale is considered null and void". Any foreigner who did not come to do business has to present himself to the Sultan of the town directly and the latter would assign a dwelling place for him in the house of a notable person.

Thus, in this case, within the city-state, there was a monopoly of trade by the citizens. Contracts, be they sale or purchase, could only be effected by them through traders arriving by ship. This monopoly was a privilege which had come down from the old-time immigrants, the Arabs and Persians, as was demonstrated by monuments and old genealogies, compared with transient sailors and Africans who came from territories outside the walled city.

From documents we gather, however, that the privilege was less exclusive in practice by dint of the acceptance of one or other clan among the citizens, though nobility was the guideline, and some foreign traders, thus, found a leeway for establishing themselves in the city. On the other hand, shepherds' groups allowed *jus connubi* with the citizens were able to gradually assimilate their ethnic environment, though territorially African, in the isolated city. When it comes to the Somali Banadir along the Indian Ocean, they really came under Somali control in the XVIII century, that is to say, four centuries after ibn Battuta. Even then, the city-state kept its own formal autonomy, scrutiny of which, at least, would drift us beyond the chronological limits of this subject at hand.

And according to studies of the way they were and remained, in those centuries in the East African Banadir, the *hospitality* system which



ibn Battuta told of his voyages in his narration separates, as it were, into two different magistrates in the city-state: the *Abban*, the guarantor, who protected the foreigner vis-à-vis local ethnic groups and the administration of the city and who, as already declared by ibn Battuta, presented himself as a proxy in any commercial dealing; and the *Gogolla* who had the responsibility of hosting the foreigner and, who acted as policeman in market disputes. It is as well to add here that the Bandar was so organised along maritime routes and its own name, Bandar (a landing-place), extends in both Asia and Africa even where there was some establishment of land traffic along caravan routes. Taking Harar as an example, where traders concentrated and marketed their merchandise from Aden, to and from India and towards Ethiopia, the name Bandar was in local terminology, although the city was at least 300 km away from the sea; and had been, just like other maritime Banadirs, a walled city distinguished ethnically from neighbouring areas. One other analogous application of the name Bandar and therefore of the system it stands for, which has been noted in Syria-Iraq, which was, among other things, the continental rival to the maritime route to the Indies.

This Bandar norm has had much important historical consequences, even beyond legal, trade and navigational matters. Above all, I would like to draw attention to the typical phenomenon of city language. The East African walled town of Brava on the shores of the Indian Ocean, and the walled city of Harar, whose position between the Gulf of Aden and Ethiopia has been touched upon, each have their own language which is spoken only within the limits of Bandar and hence within the circle of the wall: Bravan belongs to a negro Bantu people, while Somali dialects are spoken around it, Harar is a Semitic language of the southern Ethiopian group. The Oromo and Somali spoken Bandar has been constituted not only as a region isolated from the surrounding territory, but the isolation has also linguistically solidified into a language which has distinguished itself as different from the ones surrounding it. As we have seen regarding the Deep Middle Ages where the Greco-Roman stations along the maritime route to the Indies had often become centres

for the diffusion of Christianity, the Banadir also became bases for the diffusion of Islam in the following medieval period. Therefore, the promotion of traffic together with the contact with people that entailed assured the diffusion of ideas in the highest fields. One minor confirmation, but no less typical of this role, played by the seaway to the Indies, is the exchanges of traditional tales and literary motifs which modern studies are still identifying. These exchanges have caused amazement, for example, the tale of the *Whale-Island*. An enormous floating cetacean was taken to be an island by sailors who boarded its back believing it was land. This tale is found in *Physiologos*, a Greek-Alexandrian treatise writer of the II century AD, and later, it becomes the *Marvel of the Indies*, a tale in Arabic of Sindbad, which was then included in *The Thousand And One Nights*. It reappears in the Christian Arabic literature of Egypt and in Ethiopian literature when the whale ends up landing along Lake Tana. It also appears in the Renaissance in splendid poetry by Ludovico Ariosto.

I must conclude my discourse with a typical example of such exchanges. I have already mentioned the historical role which the end of the X<sup>th</sup> century predominated in the traffic to the Indies and the role played by the port of Siraf on the Persian Gulf. The Siraf hegemony was succeeded in the X to XIII centuries (more precisely from 978 to 1023) by the hegemony of the adjacent landing-place of Qays, an island situated near Siraf. The Persian historian Fadhlullah al-Shirazi spoke in his History presented to the Shah of Persia Ulgaytu Khan about the far-away origins of the merits of Qays.

Qays, the son of Qaysar, abandoned Siraf in misery and took refuge on an island which had taken its name from him. The mother of Qays had nothing but a *Chat* which she had entrusted to a merchant who was about to leave for India. The ship reached a country devastated by rats. The king of the country, to whom the merchant offered the *Chat* then an unknown animal in that part of India, bought it for its weight in gold, and so the rats fled. With the Indian gold from the sale of the *Chat*, the Qas family became powerful and founded a landing stage on the island

which became a new base for navigation to the Indies for three centuries. In a mediaeval European literary piece of work, the *annales stadenses*, one can read a chronicle of the prosperity of Venice: There used to live two fellow countrymen, one rich and the other poor. The rich one was about to leave to trade and asked the poor one to give him some goods. "I do not have any" said the other "except two cats". The rich one took the two cats with him and unexpectedly happened to reach a land where rats had devastated the country. So he sold the cats for a great deal of money and took back a very large profit to his partner".

Therefore, the legend had travelled from Persia to Venice through this maritime route and it becomes more characteristic when it later appears at the start of the sixteenth century in England where it becomes the popular story of the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Richard Whittington and his cat, to whom he owed his riches and glory.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, with this legendary tale this review come to a close. It has been presented regarding the historical legal system of the seaway to India, but could not have afforded to mention in the history, the authentic and very high contribution in economic, political, cultural and artistic contacts it has made between the East and the West on which glorious Venice is still doing today.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. my own article, *Una Traduzione Medievale Sulle Origini Di Venezia E Le Sue Fonti Orientali*, In *Rivista Studi Orientali*, XXIV, 1949 pp. 145-160.



### 3. *THE RED SEA IN THE HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL NAVIGATION*<sup>+</sup>

The history, including the economical one, of the old world is concentrated at least from the epoch of Augustus up to the VII century after Christ, in the rivalry between the two great empires: the Roman (then Byzantine) and the Persian. The long battle, with intermittent rest and détente after fatigue, had its own violent conclusion with Khosroe's expedition that had brought the Persian army to Jerusalem and to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea in 614 and the counter offensive of Emperor Heraclius who led his army to re-conquer the Holy City. The events of this last putsch would cause a violent and lasting echo from the part of the Koran and hence the epic Arab deeds only to be continued in epic poems about Hercules of East Africa (in Swahili), the Greek poems by Giorgius of Pisidia to those of Gautier d'Arras (French) and the one of Otte (German). Above all, it had the historically serious consequence of weakening the might and prestige of the two rival Empires so much so that it made the Arab victories and the establishment of the Islamic Empire easier.<sup>1</sup>

These Goliath events of the VII century had a profound effect on traffic beyond the Mediterranean Sea. Rome (and the *Second Rome* Constantinople) and Persia particularly represented the competition for the maritime route though the Red Sea en route to the Indian Ocean - prevalently under the Roman influence - with the land route from Persia to Mesopotamia and thence to the Syrian shore on the Mediterranean Sea: the one and the other Empires, likewise, trying to keep an eye on and

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<sup>+</sup> [A Report made to the International Congress about the History of Navigation, September 1961. Unpublished].

<sup>1</sup> Cf. what I have said in the passage: *Islam In The History of Deep Middle Ages*, here above p. 4.

eventually impeding the rival traffic through the co-operation of other states not far away from the route chosen by the rival party. The establishment of the Islamic Empire of the Caliphs be it with the 'Omayyad when they had their capital in Damascus or with the 'Abbasids when their capital became Baghdad, limited a great deal if not annulling, the importance of the Red Sea as the seaway from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indies. The entire land route from the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea to the valleys of Hindu was now under the dominion of the Caliphs; and it was further completed and stepped up by the extraordinary development of navigation from the Persian Gulf toward India. This navigation, which used to follow the coast and was easily protected, had the following ports as the point of departure: Basra, the port of the same Baghdad, the capital of the 'Abbasids Caliphate, and Sīraf in southern Persia. The Red Sea, however, had always interested the Arab Empire in this period, who wanted it for the seaway for the pilgrimage to Mecca, a religious duty of any Muslim. No more therefore, would the transits from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean need the protection of the Islamic Empire, but conversely the ones from the Indian Ocean to southern Arabia would. In answer to the call of this religious necessity, the occupations of the pilgrim are attributed to Pilgrimage; for example, from the Dahlak Islands, already attested to in 715 AD, to other operations on the Eritrean coast to the south of Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, and still in this epoch (from the VII century up to the dawn of the X) the traffic from the Mediterranean Sea cannot claim to be interrupted entirely. In fact, the Persian geographer, ibn Khurdadbeh, who wrote in Arabic, (846-885) said that the Jewish traders, who spoke Arabic, Persian and other European languages «brought eunuchs, female slaves, young boys, brocades, beaver pelts, marten fur and furs and swords from the west. They sailed from the country of the Franks on the western sea for Farama (a Pelusium in Egypt). There they loaded their merchandise on camelbacks and departed by land to Qulzum (Clysma, on

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. E. Cerulli, *L'Islam Etiopico* hereunder on pp. 113-135,

the Gulf of Suez) at a distance of 25 *parasangs*. From there they embarked for the eastern sea (the Red Sea) to Jar (the port of Medina) and passing through Jeddah, they left for India and China. On their way back they fetched musk, aloe wood, camphor, cinnamon and other products from the Orient, returned to Qulzum and from there to Farma where they boarded ships for the western sea. Some of them sailed for Constantinople and sold their merchandise to the Greeks; others went to the King of the Franks». <sup>3</sup> This evidence collected by ibn Khurdadbeh means that the traffic was not entirely interrupted through the Red Sea; albeit its date cannot be determined with certainty because the Persian Geographer could probably have made use of sources before him. Nevertheless, within these limits and considering, therefore, the year 846 AD as an *ante quam* term, the evidence becomes valid.

The same ibn Khurdadbeh refers to the other route, the continental one, and to the traffic between the Mediterranean Sea and India: "At other times the Jewish traders set out for the country of the Franks and made for Antioch at the mouth of the Orontes. From there they used go to al-Jabiya on the Euphrates, sailed up the Euphrates to Baghdad and onto al-'Obolla, from where they set out for 'Oman, Sind, Hindustan and China'. <sup>4</sup>

Some years after al-Balkhi (born circa 850) whose writings are not available except in a later re-adaptation of geographer, also a Persian, al-Istakhri, who, after having mentioned the continental route from Egypt to Iran (and to China), from Qulzum en route to Iraq, and to Persia (and to the Iranian territory of Balkh, the homeland of the same geographer), added his own reservations about the Red Sea route said "For those who would like to follow the shortest route from Qulzum to China by sea, the (maritime) itinerary is longer due to the meanderings and turns of the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh, *Kitab al-Masalik* ed., by M. J. De Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, Paris VI, Leiden 1889. pp. 153-154 (transl.).

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh cit., Wor., Ibidem.

routes of that sea.<sup>5</sup> The inevitable circumnavigation of the Arabian Peninsula, together with the Red Sea route, where numerous islands and reefs represented dangerous obstacles to navigation then will be more explicitly affirmed by subsequent writers.

To these natural obstacles was added the danger of piracy which used to inveigh in the Red Sea and plundered those sailing ships carrying pilgrims to Mecca and also made incursions in search of booty on the islands, as occurred on Dahlak in the reign of the 'Abbasids Caliph al-Mansur (754-775 AD).<sup>6</sup>

With the consolidation of the Caliphate of Baghdad, the hub of traffic through the Red Sea fell apart, because the land route from Syria toward the Orient was now completed with a subsequent maritime one. Indeed one other historian and geographer of the 'Abbasids court, al-Ya'qubi, who wrote between the year 889 AD and 905<sup>7</sup> followed a route from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf through Wasit, Basra and al-Obolla and from there by sea to Bahrain, 'Oman and India. Thus, Baghdad, the capital of the Empire of the Caliphs, «came to see commercial products and foodstuffs pour in, by land or by sea; because any type of goods could be transported there with a minimum effort and uninterrupted manner from both the East and the West, from Muslim and non-Muslim countries. In fact this merchandise was imported from India, Sind, China, Tibet and

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<sup>5</sup> *Viae Regnorum. Ditions Moslemicae Autore Abu Ishak al-Farisi al-Istakhuri*, ed. by M. J. Do Goejc (*Bibliothca Geographorum*, Paris I) p. 6. In connection with al-Istahri's to al-Balkhi, Cf. the article by D. M. Dunlop, in *Encyclopedie De L'Islam*, II ed., S.v. al-Balkhi.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. R. Basset, *Les Inscriptions De L'île De Dahlak*, In *Journal Asiatique*, 1893, p. 90. A plunder on Dahlak Island did really happen, according to al-Tabari, in the year 141 *Hegira* (758-759 AD). But who are *the Indians* responsible for looting the inhabitants of Dahlak اغار عليهم الهند قسيروهم (Tabari, t. III, p. I, Leiden 1879, p. 135)? Ten years later, among others, in 151 *Hegira* (768-769 AD) another plunder by the pirates was committed as a matter of fact, in the port of Jeddah (Tabari, t. III, p. I, cit., p. 359); and the pirates were named by Tabari *Kurk*. This plunder in Geddah had then created a great deal of uproar that Caliph al-Mansur in 153 *Hegira* (= 770 AD, on his way back from a pilgrimage to Mecca, prepared an armed expedition against the *Kurk* pirates, as has been attested by ibn al-'Athail. (Kamil, Vol. V, p. 466, ed. by Tornberg, Lydda 1871; Tabari, it III, pp. I, cit., pp. 370). The plunder of 141 *Hegira* (=758-759.) also according to ibn al-'Athail (*Kamil*, Vol. V, p. 389) was a deed committed by *the Indians* (*Hind*; and as a source he quotes Tabari or the same source of Tabari.

<sup>7</sup> Ya'qubi, *Les Pays*, transl. by G. Wiet, Cairo 1937, pp. XI.



from the countries of the Turks, the Daylamites, the Khazars and the Abyssinians»<sup>8</sup> and Basra is described by al-Ya'qubi as «the first city of the world, the commercial centre and pre-eminently rich.»<sup>9</sup>

Navigation through the Red Sea - other than for pilgrimage - was also important for local traffic; it is useful for the supply, according to al-Ya'qubi, the regions of the Arab side of the Hejaz and Yemen with products from Egypt.<sup>10</sup> One other port of traffic now started to be identified on the Red Sea: 'Aydab, in the southern sector of the African shore. According to the geographer, al-Balkhi, 'Aydab a non-Egyptian port belonging to the Begia tribe was an outlet to the sea of mines within Begia territory, south of Egypt.<sup>11</sup> Al-Ya'qubi confirmed this role played by 'Aydab regarding the mines, specifying it as the port of departure to Mecca, Hejaz and Yemen where merchant ships loaded gold, ivory and other goods of the similar nature.<sup>12</sup> 'Aydab, according to al-Ya'qubi, was situated at a distance of four days by caravan from 'Allaqi, which was an Arab gold-mining centre.<sup>13</sup>

A different question has to be negotiated regarding the information supplied by al-Ya'qubi about Aden, saying: «Aden, the port of Sana'a, where the ships from China dropped anchor» Was there, then, traffic from China (and therefore from India) which stopped-over at 'Aden? Did this traffic then follow the Red Sea route towards the Mediterranean? It seems to be a hypothesis which must be excluded for reasons based on the general historical evidence that has been described.

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<sup>8</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 167

<sup>10</sup> Cit. Wor., p. 199 'Qulzum ... a great coastal town where the exporting traders in foodstuff, to Hijaz and Yemen are stationed'. Cf. Cit., Wor., p. 155). An almost similar information to the same word, though from a common source, comes from ibn Rusteh (who wrote between 902 and 913 AD). Cf. Vol. VII of the *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, ed. by M. J. De Goeje, p. 340.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Istakhri, *Viae Regnorum Etc.*, p. 29 (text). Al-Istakhri even records the opinion of some who say how Ethiopian (*Habashah*). Cf. Cit., Wor., p. 54 (text)

<sup>12</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 190.

<sup>13</sup> Cit., WOR, p. 1 91.

The information derived from al-Ya'qubi is nevertheless valid, because it refers to - according to my own conviction - not only traffic with the Mediterranean Sea area which, above all, would have diminished the predominant position of Baghdad, but rather the trade later, for centuries, with the African coast of the Indian Ocean. From the coast of that landing-stage, some typical East African products which were in high demand for a long time by the Chinese market used to reach 'Aden by coastal navigation negotiating the monsoon course: shark, shells, rhinoceros horns, grey amber and others - more nefarious - African slaves and ivory.

It would be imprudent to judge historically those pieces of information gathered from medieval oriental writers without bearing in mind those which might today be called commercial propaganda that assumes a noteworthy importance in a certain epoch and in certain countries where this information regarding navigable routes was often restricted or even a secret. A typical case of this attitude is, for example, one already seen, and the information on the danger of navigation through the Red Sea towards the Mediterranean. A continuance on this theme, which gives it a religious hue, can be traced to 'pieces of information' by Abu Zayd Hassan, a merchant in Siraf, who wrote - according to Gabriel Ferrand - in about 915 AD. He applied the passage from the Koran (Sura XXVII, 62) to the Suez isthmus, because it closes the maritime route of the Red Sea to the Mediterranean: (God) has put a barrier between two seas. This passage in the elaborated affirmation of the oneness of God confronted with paganism is parallel to that of the Koran, XXV, 55: «the two seas the sweet and agreeable one, the salty and bitter, and God has put a barrier between them» a passage evidently referring to very far geographical locations from the Mediterranean and Red Seas.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, Abu Zayd Hassan concludes by saying «the ships owned by Siraf ship-owners do not dare follow the northern part of the Red Sea due to

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<sup>14</sup> (G Farrand *Voyage Du Marchand Arabe Sulayman Et En Chine* Paris 1922 pp. 130 and 94.

difficulties that impede navigation.».<sup>15</sup>

This reference had been made regarding, among others, the one a little after al-Mas'udies,<sup>16</sup> which repeated the identification of the Isthmus of Suez with 'a barrier between the two Seas' of the Koran, fairly pin-pointing that this barrier from Al Qulzum «on the shore of the China Sea» used to be crossed in a single caravan night. Al-Mas'udi had been to Egypt in 947 and in 955 AD.

It cannot be said any better when we have justified the situation of Siraf which had, at the start of the X century become the predominant landing-stage for traffic heading to India, where the land route from the Mediterranean Sea was on the threshold of being on its shore more than that of Basra, the other merchant city equal to Siraf. Suleiman who wrote, according to Gabriel Ferrand, in 851 AD, had declared the dangers of navigation in the Persian Gulf for those who wished to continue from Siraf to Basra, «because there the sea is often tempestuous and furthermore the water is not deep enough in many places» and therefore it would be as well to ship Indian merchandise to Siraf and thence transport it to other destinations by means of light boats. The supremacy acquired by Siraf in the maritime traffic of India was, proved by the 'Book of the Marvels of India' a collection of sea adventures written a little after 343 Hegira.(=954-995 AD), and mainly composed of tales told by seamen who left or arrived at Siraf and who, owing to their sad vicissitudes, dreamt of going back there or to 'Oman'.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For a wonder than that Abu Zayd Hasan, Having later found amber on the Syrian coast sometimes and since sperm-whale grey amber had already been exclusively found on the Indian coasts, he comes to the conclusion (cit., Wor., p. 94) that whoever believes this to be an evidence of a communication between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea errs. This communication, in fact, would be contrary to the quoted passage of the Koran. We ought to imagine, instead, that the Indian Ocean amber could have been the act of a sea from another sea along the exterior side of the ocean and thus rolling and drifting the amber could have arrived to the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Mas'udi, *Kitab al-Tanbih*, Ed. by M. J. de Goeje (*Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, Vol. VII, Lydda 1894, p. 20).

<sup>17</sup> The same author of the 'Book of the Marvels of India' was a Persian; and Basra has been named as a landing-place for arrivals, namely, the marketplace of goods from Siraf or from 'Oman. Cf. *Livre Des Merveilles De L'Inde Par Le Capitaine Bozorg Fils De Chahriyar De Ramhormoz*, Arab text by P. A. Van der Lith, and the French translation by C. M. Device, Lydda 1883-1886.

So in conclusion, if during the Medieval epoch competition was afoot between the sea-way from the Mediterranean to the Indies, patronised by the Eastern Roman Empire, and the land route, patronised by the Persian Empire, the rise of Islam and the establishment of the Islamic Empire at the middle of the VII century after the birth of Christ alters the course of events radically. Damascus and Baghdad, the successive seats of the Caliphate, both on the old land route would thus be centres of the Mediterranean-India traffic; and so the Red Sea lost its importance in world trade. Later, however, in the XI century, the flourishing of the Abbasids Caliphate consequence to the more centralisation of Baghdad and the opening of a new sea-route integrated the land route with that of the Mediterranean-Baghdad one; and so navigation from the Persian Gulf to the Indies with a transshipment at Basra, came to enjoy a great emporium, or at al-Obolla, while at a later date in the X century these landing-stages, lying on the delta of the Tigris and that of the Euphrates became decadent, and the traffic to India from the port of Siraf came to be confirmed as the hub in the southern part of Persia, and of that of Oman on the Arabian coast.

This new line of seaway traffic had another consequence: the intensification of trade along the navigation route towards China. The old caravan route, which left from Iraq and crossed Persia and Central Asia to reach the Chinese Empire, 'the silk route', now had serious competition from navigation which was in correlation with the Persian Gulf-India and Indian Ocean on its way to the China Sea.

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This situation however, of the supremacy of the landing stages of the Persian Gulf and southern Persia was changed, once more, in the last ten years of the X century by a new political event in the Mediterranean arena: the establishment of the Fatimid's Caliphate in Egypt.

On the first day of July 969 Jawhar entered the Egyptian capital victoriously. He did so at the head of an army sent by the fourth Fatimid's Caliph, al-Mu'izz. The Fatimid is, claiming to be the descendants of the

Prophet's family and therefore the only legitimate Caliphs vis-à-vis the 'Abbasids of Baghdad had already established themselves from the beginning of 909 AD in a vast kingdom in northern Africa, now modern-day Algeria and Tunisia. With the victory of their general Jawhar, they now became the masters of Egypt which was to be the centre of their Empire. The conflict with the Caliphate of Baghdad would thus have a new impulse and the Fatimid's undertaking toward Palestine and Syria directly invited their action.

There were two immediate results of these events, depending on research: above all, it was clear that the Fatimid's were interested in giving value and efficiency once more to the Mediterranean-India route to the Red Sea by way of assuring a maximum increase in Egyptian traffic, making Alexandria the hub of traffic with the East and replacing Baghdad, the capital of the rival Empire and the Abbasids, the enemy. Furthermore, the local situation in the Persian Gulf was already changing. Earlier, the occupation by the princes of Buyidi of Daylam in 977 had diminished the importance of the town of Siraf, the navigation base toward India across the Persian Gulf, and then in 977, an earthquake destroyed the town. So, Siraf was substituted by Qays,<sup>18</sup> and then by 'Oman. The Persian geographer, when writing his *Hudud al-'Alam* in 982 (but still elaborating upon, as usual, former sources), limited the qualification of Siraf as 'the emporium of Fars' while 'Oman for him was «the emporium of all the universe. There was no other town in the world where traders were richer. All the goods from the East, West, North and South were brought to this very town and from there they were marketed in different countries».<sup>19</sup> This crisis of an arrangement in those last decades of the X century probably made the exploitation of the Fatimid's Caliphate in favour of

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<sup>18</sup> Regarding the Persian legend of the emigration from Siraf to Qays and for the enrichment of this new centre, Cf. my own article *Una Tradizione Medievale Sulle Origini Di Venezia E Le Sue Fonti Orientali*, In *Rivista Degli Studi Orientali*, XXIV 1946, pp. 145-160.

<sup>19</sup> *Hudud al-'Alam. The Regions of The World, A Persian Geography*, 372 A. H. 982 A. D. Translated and explained by V. Minorsky, London 1937 (*F. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series*, N. S. XI), pp. 127 and 148.

Egypt, easier.

The second outcome of the revival of Alexandria as the centre of traffic beyond the Mediterranean Sea was the direct intervention of the Maritime Italian Republics in that trade. This occurred not only for obvious geographical reasons, but also - and moreover - because of the commercial relationship with Italy. And because of this, the development of these relations after the conquest of Egypt and the new principal ambitions harboured by Fatimid's politics, were deemed to be normal and useful for both parties concerned.

Amalfi's rapprochement with the North African Muslim States was, though old, got the better of, in a short period of time, by the rise of the Fatimid's themselves. In the Year 871 a Muslim, whom the Salernitan Chronicler calls *Arrane* wished to inform Salerno, by way of gratitude to Prince Gualiferio who had performed a favour for him, «*dum illuc Amalfitani adessent*» gave a piece of information to Fluro Amalfitano about a naval expedition which was being prepared against Salerno.<sup>20</sup> This valuable information was transmitted to Salerno; but later during the fight, Duke Marino of Amalfi took a very cautious attitude in 872. He «*qui pacem cum Agarenis a primitus habebat, sed Salernitanos pleniter diligebat*» passed provisions, to Salerno alone; and secretly, the Amalfitans «*suaque alimenta omnia dispertierunt et arts qua poterant clam Salernitanis obtulerunt eosque refoverunt*».<sup>21</sup>

Amalfi's rapprochements with North Africa gave impetus to Pope John VIII's severe interventions from 877 up to the last letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 880 AD and until the threat of excommunication, which involved the Pulcary *prefectory*. The bishop of Amalfi himself and the Amalfitan Republic which had to give in, even if the Duke of Naples was bent on resisting further.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Chronicon Salernitanum*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Ehistorica*, SS, III, p. 528.

<sup>21</sup> *Chronicon Salernitanum*, cit., on page 531. *Chronicon* was written a little before 980-981 AD.

<sup>22</sup> Regarding these events CF. M. Camera, *Memorie Storico-Diplomatiche Dell' Antica Citta E Ducato Di Amalfi*, Volume I, Salerno 1876, pp. 115-119.

Nevertheless, relationships continued and developed with the Fatimid's Egypt even when the Normans, answering orders made by Robertus the Juscard, conquered Amalfi and interrupted this development; the poet-chronicler Guglielmo of Apulia, who wrote his third book between 1099 and 1111, sang about Amalfi.<sup>23</sup>

*Hac plurimus urbe moratur  
nauta, maris coelique vias aperire peritus,  
Huc et Alexandri diversa feruntur ab urbe  
regis et antiochi; haec freta plurima transit.  
Hic Arabes, Indi,<sup>24</sup> Siculi noscuntur et Afri,  
Haec gens est totum probe nobilitata per orbem;  
et mercanda ferens et amans mercata referre.*

Returning to the research on the situation in Egypt, two historically documented episodes attest to the situation of the Amalfi traders in Fatimid's Egypt. In 996 AD, sixteen Egyptian ships, built on the orders of the minister, 'Isa ibn Nastur, all caught fire and burnt in the same shipyard of Cairo. The disaster caused a violent popular riot and the fanatical agitators accused the Amalfitans (al-Malafita) of arson. The mob became fierce against those foreigners, attacked Amalfitan houses, barbarously killed 160 (or 107, according to another source) and dragged the torn corpses through the city; the hot-headed youth went in procession, each carrying the head of a victim as if it were a piece for collection. Vizier 'Isa ibn Nastur did his best to reclaim the looted goods; and Caliph al-Aziz had the main culprits decapitated and caned. So the riot was quelled.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Guglielmo of Apulia, *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, III p. 275. Guglielmo of Apulia (and actually of Giovinazzo) really has this passage in his third book, in which post quem has been given because of the mentioning of the conquest by Saint Sepulchre in 1099.

<sup>24</sup> I follow the interpretation *Indi* in the old editions, while the publisher has preferred *Libi* in the monuments. We have to bear in mind that *Indi*, owing to the famous confusion made by the medieval writers between India and Ethiopia, could also mean the Ethiopians or a certain people beyond the Gulf of Suez.

<sup>25</sup> Claude Cahen, *Un Texte Peu Connu Relatif Au Codmrcce Oriental D'amalfi Au X Sicle*, in *Archivo Storico Provincie Napoletane*, N. S. Anno XXXIV, 1953-1954 pp. 61-66 (the text is of that

One other document is about détente with Caliph al-Amir (1101-1130) upon the arrival in Alexandria of Italian traders<sup>26</sup> with a load of timber, a particularly popular item in Egypt. Among these traders was one at least from Amalfi, Grasso di Leone (or di Lupino)<sup>27</sup> who had in the document, the undeniable description of al-Malfitani. However, in the report, there appeared also, as an importer, another Italian trader who was described by al-Gabawi as ‘the Genovese’ and whose name read Bonsignore. Therefore, Genoa appeared for the first time on the side of Amalfi in these commercial documents of the Fatimid’s Egypt.

At Genoa, among others, trade with countries beyond the Mediterranean had already started thanks to the eastern traders who had established them in the Logure capital; and their names were Ribaldo di Sarafia; Solimano di Salerno and Buongiovanni Malfigliastro whose later traffic passed into the hands of Ganovese families.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, Genoa entered into competition with Egypt and hence with the countries beyond

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of Yahya of Antioch in *Partologia Orientalis*, XXIII, pp.451-458), which Claude Cahen integrates with the information supplied by al-Musabbihî found in *Khîtat* by al-Maqrîzî [II, 195-196]). The ordered repressions by the Fatimid’s Caliphate also had the motive of, as Claude Cahen rightly notes, the great interest of that Sovereign in timber and lead trafficking should not have to be interrupted.

<sup>26</sup> S. M. Sten *An Original Document From The Fatimid Chancery Concerning Italian Merchants In Studi Orientalistici In Onore Di Gio Rgiovanni Della Vida*, Rome 1956, Vol. II pp. 529-538.

<sup>27</sup> Concerning the name of the trader, I follow the supposition of S. M. Stern, cit., Wor., on p. 535. It is probable however, that not only about this Grasso de Leone, but also about one of other traders mentioned in the document: Sergio di Costantino, may be an Amalfitan, as has already been noted by S. M. Stern, cit., Wor., p. 537.

Still, one other Amalfitan trader: Leone, the son of Sergio di Lupino De Rini, appears in two documents of 978 AD in the Archivio della Badia di Cava dei Tirreni, the last ‘*Babilonian ad navigandum*’ Cf. F. Coniglio, *Amalfi E Il Commercio Amalfitano Nel Medio Evo*, In *Nouva Rivista Storica*, XXVIII-XXIX, 1944-1945, p. 102 note 1; a Text in *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis*, Salerno 1873, Vol. II pp. 114-115.

<sup>28</sup> *Solimano di Salerno*, a Jewish merchant, has made at least two important trips from Genoa to Alexandria in 1156 and 1160, and we gather from the documents that he had also contracts for the marketing of imported oriental goods (and sell it in Genoa) with Sicily, Majorca and in the continental Spain. He was absolutely ‘a power in the Alexandrian trade’. Buongiovanni Malfigliastro, probably originating from the Byzantine Empire, had had Alexandria as if it were the base for his very wide trade. At the time of the third Crusade (1189-1192), his family and heirs had already, a numerous fleet of mercantile ships. Cf. Eugene H. Byrne, *Easterners In Genoa In Journal of The American Oriental Society*, XXXVIII, 1918, pp. 179-180.



Suez<sup>29</sup> and soon it outdid Amalfi that within a short period would be united with the Norman Kingdom.

Some ten years after this hap had been passed by the Caliphate of al-Amir; the Persian traveller Nasir-i Khusraw described the status of Mediterranean and Red Sea trade with Egypt. He wrote, after his trip to Egypt in 1050 AD, that in Cairo crystal objects wrought by artisans were found in the markets. The crystal items came from the Maghreb (and namely from Northern Africa, west of Egypt); albeit, says our author "some have recently been received from the sea and they were of a more beautiful quality and more transparent than those of the Maghreb".<sup>30</sup> Nasir-i Khusraw also saw in Cairo elephant tusks imported from Zanzibar and «there was brought an ox skin from Abyssinia that looked like a leopard's from which they make sandals», that is to say, a giraffe skin. There also came from the same country «an ad domesticated bird of a great height, whose feathers are spotted white and black and on whose head there is a forelock similar to that of a peacock», that is to say an ostrich.<sup>31</sup>

Regarding the origin of these products from the countries of the Red Sea and beyond, before they came to Cairo, Nasir-i Khusraw made mention of two seaways. The first was the traditional one along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula, from Qulzum to Gar, the port of Medina, and «upon departing if one follows the coastline, one arrives in Yemen, then reaches Hindustan and upon continuing the voyage one reaches China». <sup>32</sup> The second route, instead, was new. The landing-stage 'Aydab was no

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<sup>29</sup> Hilmar C; Krueger, *The Wares of Exchange In The Genovese-African Traffic of The Twelfth Century*, in *Speculum* XII, 1937. p. 71. Pisa, instead, would not enjoy a great deal of trade with Egypt; its main traffic would still remain with Tunisia; though it would in veigh against the Genovese in the mortal combat: '*Meretrices uxores Venetum, adhuc ausi estics ire per mare?*' (s. a. 1195). Cf. *Anales Januenses*, ed. by Delgrano, Vol. I pp. 54-55.

<sup>30</sup> *Sefer Nameh, Relation Du Voyage De Nassiri Khosrau Enl Syrie, En Palestine, En Egypte, En Arabie Et En Perse Pendant Les Annes Del'hegire 437- 444 (1035-1042)* [sic! read 1045-1052 A. D.] *Edite Et Trduit Par* Ch. Schefer, Praris 1881, p. 51 (Persian text), pp. 149-150 (translation).

<sup>31</sup> *Sefer Nameh, Ibidem.*

<sup>32</sup> *Sefer Nameh*, pp. 41-42 (Persian text)p. 124 (translation)

longer in Egyptian territory by the middle of the IX century, when it became the outlet of the sea of mines existing in Begia territory at the close of that IX century. Now 'Aydab, where Nasir-i Khusraw arrived on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1050 (= 20 *Rabi' al-Awwal* 442), was now an Egyptian port where the Fatimid Caliph collected his customs dues. 'Aydab was a point of departure for the caravan route which led to Aswan and to the desert. At Aswan, the merchandise was loaded on to boats which cruised down the Nile to Cairo.<sup>33</sup> There at 'Aydab goods from Abyssinia, Yemen and Zanzibar arrived from sea, by caravans, and then by water-way, they went to Cairo and so met the Mediterranean merchants, thus saving the need for a sea-way voyage though the northern part of the Red Sea.

When we refer to the 'Aydab route we refer also to another important document of the Fatimid's epoch, which was recently found in a Cairo Jennet. A native Libyan merchant (named al-Lebdi, hence a native of Leptis Magna) left Cairo on a date prior to 1097 for India. He boarded a boat on the Nile for Aswan, loaded his goods onto a caravan and thus reached the port of 'Aydab. Boarding a ship at 'Aydab, he made a stop-over and struck a business deal before reaching the Dahlak Islands. He did the same in Aden when he arrived there from Gujarat. On his way back, he made a stopover at Mirbat instead of Aden (still in the same Hadhramaut) and then headed for Dahlak, reaching 'Aydab and therefore Cairo. In 1097-1098, his commercial activities in Dahlak and Aden caused litigation to which the Jennet document made reference.<sup>34</sup> After a short time mention was made in the same documents concerning the despatch of merchandise with which the head of the Jewish community in Aden, Madmun made to Cairo via 'Aydab.<sup>35</sup> Madmun died in 1151 AD and appeared to have established a route from Aden to Ceylon.<sup>36</sup> It is therefore

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<sup>33</sup> *Sefer Nameh*, p. 63 (Persian text), pp. 177-0178 (translation)

<sup>34</sup> D. S. Goiten, *From The Mediterranean To India, Documents On The Trade To India, South Arabia And East Africa From The Eleventh And Twelfth Centuries*, in *Speculum*, XXIX, 1954, p. 192.

<sup>35</sup> D. S. Goiten, cit., *Wor.*, pp. 188-189.

<sup>36</sup> D. S. Goiten, cit., *Wor.*, p. 191.

possible that those consignments which arrived in the Mediterranean arena were of Indian origin.

What types of merchandise were these traders in the Fatimid epoch active in? Amongst the goods imported into Egypt and therefore into the Mediterranean countries, pepper was at the top of the list together with cinnamon, other spices and ammonia salt (Nixandra) of Persian origin which was imported in 1191 by the Genoese from Khorasan. Rubies, dyeing materials, saffron crocus, lacquer as well as pelts and leather goods were imported from Ceylon,<sup>37</sup> and crystal rock, as mentioned earlier. In older times, goods like camphor, aloe timber and musk came by a different route, from Baghdad-Persian Gulf.<sup>38</sup> From Europe toward Egypt and elsewhere goods that were exported were textiles, particularly from Lombardy followed by «*Yspaniae fabric, tela Alamaniae*»,<sup>39</sup> timber and lead, articles to be mentioned later.

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During the second period of the Fatimid's epoch the Crusades started and Jerusalem was taken in 1099. However, before the commencement of the undertaking on the part of the Crusaders from Jerusalem and Europe against Egypt, the direct initiative of the Franks towards the Red Sea was the one taken by Rinald Chântillon. This uncertain feudal system of the Eastern Crusade, rich with an adventurous spirit, blocked the Muslim fortress of Ayla (modern-day Elat) situated at the bottom of the Gulf of 'Aqaba. It sent a naval squadron through the Red Sea for «*cierkier et savoir quels gens mancient sour cele mer d'autre part*» in 1181 as said in a fragment attributed to the chronicler Ernoul. Rinald Chântillon had boldly brought his ships to the Gulf of 'Aqaba dismantled them and loaded them on caravans, a difficult undertaking even in those days. With those ships, the Crusaders launched an attack,

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<sup>37</sup> Hilmar C. Krueger, cit., Wor., pp. 57-71.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Khurdadbeh, cit., Wor., p.115 (transl.); p.154 (text).

<sup>39</sup> Hilmar C. Krueger, cit., Wor.

took and plundered 'Aydab, a valuable asset for Egyptian trade. They also pushed further and assaulted the caravan route from 'Aydab to the Nile looting at least one caravan. Nevertheless the undertaking was too audacious because Husam ad-Din Lu'lu' vanquished the Crusaders before the Hijazena coast and massacred them on the spot. He then ordered the decapitation of those prisoners taken to Cairo «so that not one person should remain alive lest they pass the news and thus make the route to the Red Sea known» as written by the Arab historian Abu Shamah. The reason for the massacre emanated from *Jealousy* with which the secret of the seaway for the Red Sea from 'Aydab was kept from the Western world.<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile in 1171, upon the death of Caliph of al-'Adhid this ended. Thus, the Fatimid's Caliphate came to a close. Saladin abolished the heavy customs duties that were imposed at 'Aydab, to facilitate its seizure. As a matter of fact, ibn Jubayr who, in 1183 AD, made a trip from Cairo to Qus on the Nile, and from thence to 'Aydab by caravan from where he set sail, describes that landing-stage as 'one of the most frequented ports in the world'. It was visited by ships from India and Yemen, pilgrims and Yemenite merchants, Ethiopians and Indians. Two caravan routes united it with Qus, whilst from Cairo, eighteen days on the Nile, would bring a traveller to Qus. But the unfavourable fact was the incredible greed of the inhabitants of 'Aydab especially towards pilgrims, so that ibn Jubayr, sickened by his own trip to 'Aydab, advised pilgrims to take the route to Syria, 'Iraq and Baghdad and return by way of 'Akka to Alexandria, and benefit both ways on the pilgrimage with an escort organised by the Emir.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, their worry was due to a probable uncertainty about the situation in the Red Sea that had already induced the Fatimid's Caliph al-Muntasir bi Allahi in 1058-1059 (450-

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<sup>40</sup> Concerning all the episodes of the expeditions by Rinald of Châtillon Cf. my own book *Etiopi In Palestina, Storia Della Comunità Etiopica Di Gerusalemme*, Rome 1943. vol. I. pp 20-26.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Jubayr, *Viaggio In Spagna, Sicilia, Palestina, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Egitto, Computo Nel Secolo XII*. Translated by Celestino Schiaparelli, Rome 1906, pp. 35-38 and 40-43.

Hegira) to intercept the transit through 'Aydab until it was restored officially by the Mameluke Sultan Baybars (1260-1277) up to when, according to al-Maqrizi, 'Aydab came to be abandoned definitely in 1358-1359 (760 Hegira).<sup>42</sup>

'Aydab lost its importance because it was overwhelmed by competition from the new landing stage of Qusayr at the dawn of the XIII century, for the latter was nearer to Qus and therefore to the Nile. And so al-Ya'qut, who wrote a short time after 1212, said of Qusayr many a time as 'a port for ships that make for Qus' Qusayr is in the vicinity of 'Aydab and is further from Qus, a town in upper Egypt, a distance of five days, while from Qus to 'Aydab is eight days there. Qusayr is a landing-place for Yemenite ships;<sup>43</sup> a quay and the nearest place to Qus in the Red Sea.<sup>44</sup> 'Aydab was a town on the coast of the Red Sea, a naval dock for ships carrying goods from Aden to Upper Egypt<sup>45</sup> (an annotation dependant on older sources than Ya'qut's information). Elsewhere he clearly states that 'Aydab 'is a Begia town'<sup>46</sup> and this predominance by the bedouins of Begia could be another reason for the decadence of that port.

Not unlike Massaua (the classical Arabic name was Badhi') which was dilapidated at the time of Ya'qut. However, Arab polygrapher noted that special products were being brought from Abyssinia to Massaua, particularly elephant tusks and ostrich eggs<sup>47</sup> and the Abyssinians would barter them for various Indian essences and herbs as well as for Indian artisanal objects.<sup>48</sup>

Regarding the port of Medina, al-Jar, al-Ya'qut repeated the

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<sup>42</sup> *Et, Outremere, Mémoires Géographiques et Historiques sur l'Égypte*, Paris 1811, Vol. II, pp. 162-163

<sup>43</sup> Al-Ya'qut, *Mu'Jam al-Buldan* ed. by F. Wustenfeld, Leipzig 1868-1871, Vol. IV, p. 126.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Ya'qut, cit., *Wor.*, Vol. II p. 159.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Ya'qut, cit., *Wor.*, Vol. IV, p. 751.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Ya'qut, cit., *Wor.*, Vol. p.159.

<sup>47</sup> Al-Ya'qut, cit., *Wor.*, Vol. I. p. 471.

<sup>48</sup> Among the herbs and essence cited by al-Ya'qut: *Qust* is an aromatic root used for fumigation; *Azfar* 'ungues odorati' (Cf. Lane s.v. p.1913).

information derived from his predecessors, that was, 'in it dock ships from Abyssinia, Egypt, Aden and China and those going to India'.<sup>49</sup>

However, and even if accomplished in these favourable circumstances, the trade through the Red Sea continued, so much so that ibn al-Mujawir, who wrote a little after 1229, noted that the inhabitants of Qays in southern Persia brought woven clothes to al-Mahdiyyah (in Tunisia). And, be it due to the great decadence of Amalfi or because of a dubitative system, an Amalfitan document in 1259, the first year of the Kingdom, the son of Federico II, Pietro, the son of Musco, and the son of Pandolfo suggested navigation toward oriental traffic: «*cum qua societate cum auxilio Dei pergo in presenti viaggio de portu Baie cum ipso butio meo qui vocatur Pandatus in Sicilia vel Alexandria vel acon vel ad alias partes ad lucrandum ubi et melius me Dominus auxiliaverit*».<sup>50</sup>

For the decadence of these various ports of the Red Sea and the other causes play a part: the Crusades, the Fifth and the Seventh launched directly against Egypt plus other campaigns rendered the transit from Alexandria to the isthmus of Suez insecure; and the endeavours of Saladin to construct an Egyptian fleet ended in fiasco. The Ayyoubi Dynasty deteriorated upon the death of the young Turan-Shah in 647 Hegira (= 1249-1250). This weakened the Egyptian state, until the Mameluke Sultanate, which after some initial conflicts consolidated itself but came short of a revival.

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This revival of Egypt, nevertheless, led to the accentuation of Mediterranean rivalry between Genoa and Venice for the domination of trade beyond the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. Further, Genoa tried to enjoy a double success through the continental and maritime routes: the Genoese colonies in the Black Sea (bought by Caffa from Genoa in 1267) were

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<sup>49</sup> Al-Ya'qut, cit., Wor., Vol. II, p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> M. Camera, *Memorie Storico-Diplomatiche Dell'Antica Citta E Ducato Di Amalfi*, cit., Vol. II, p. XL.

now employed as bases for a route which crossed Caucasian territory and followed the Caspian Sea until it reached Tabriz in northern Persia. From there they could keep in touch, directly or indirectly, with the Indian and Chinese traders. As for the Red Sea, the Genoese made use of the commercial agreement signed with the Mameluke Sultan for the purpose of reactivating for themselves, the sea-route from the Red Sea to the Nile Valley, as had been in preceding times, and then go down by caravan to the ports of 'Aydaḥ or Qusayr. The Jacobite Genoese trader brought a letter from the French Dominican Prelate Jourdain Catalani, in which was written «*Via Ethiopie est aperta cui vallet ire*» while the other Genoese trader Lanfranchino Gatucci was with the same Jourdan Catalani, who later gave in his *Mirabilia Descripta* the first identification of the Ethiopian Sovereign, the already legendary Prester John. Once more, the *Libro Del Conoscimento* by the Franciscan of Castilia had recorded the presence of Genoese traders in the Kingdom of Dongola on the Upper Nile and the Genoese papers belonging to Giovanni da Carignano and Angelino Dalorto show the Nile course toward Ethiopia.

It is really interesting to note how the one and the other of these two routes, along which the Genoese activities were set on exercising, have been also mentioned in a later date in our knighthood poems. The land route followed by the paladin heroes in Orlando Innamorato by Boiardo, led to Catai (that is China), the *seignior*y of the beautiful Angelica, continuing past Tana (the Don) and the *mar del Bacu* (the Caspian Sea). From the very start of the hymn (of book I) Angelica points to the distance from Catai and refers to Don: «Two hundred days above Tana - where we floated our boat» and Astolfo «it is day at Tana.- on the right hand side turn exactly to the lower one - and in Circasia, in Caucous he made his entrance».<sup>51</sup> Then Renald going on his trip with his co-travellers crosses the Caspian: «Out from the desert, on the right path-up the sea of Bacu yet they go».<sup>52</sup> This is the Sea of Bacu, if you do not know

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<sup>51</sup> *Orlando Innamorato*, Book I, Chap. IX, obs. on 37-38

<sup>52</sup> *Orlando Innamorato*, Book I, Chapter XVII, obs. on 58.

was said to Grifone and Aquilate who were looking for Orlando.<sup>53</sup>

For his part, Ariosto traces the itinerary of a Hippogriff to Ethiopia along the Nile valley, following the Genoese cartographer, just as I had proved in my own essay a long time ago.<sup>54</sup> This coincidence between the two poets with Genoese itineraries obviously depended on how much they were able to see in the Library of the Estenses, the court in which they operated.

Naturally - returning to economic history - the Genoese activities stirred up an immediate Venetian reaction. Concerning the land route to the Indies and to China, suffice to remember the awe-inspiring name of Marco Polo, who, among others, had even gathered information about Ethiopia in his chapter regarding Aden.<sup>55</sup> Yet the seaway route, be it in Egypt or in Aden was still more worrying for Clement V and John XXII. Two successive compilations exposed the importance of Aden as a base for traffic along the Red Sea toward Egypt and had, in a particularly interesting passage clarified how, in his days, competition was between the land route to India (and to China) and the Mediterranean - Red Sea sea-route. «*Sciendum set quod a partibus Tartarorum scilicet a Baldach et a Thorisis a magno tempore citra conducta sunt et conducta sunt et conducuntur ad praesens as Mare Mediterraneum quasi omnia mercimonia modici ponderis et magni praetii sive valoris, sicut: cubebe, spicum, gaziofili, nuces muscatae, maci et similia. Alia vero mersimonia gravioris pomderis et minoris praetii ut: piper, cinziber, thus, cannella et similia hiis, descendunt per viam Haaden in Alexandriam in maiori quantitate quam ab alia via superius nominata*». But, Marin Sanudo noted once more that, the quality of ginger and that of cinnamon which arrived at Alexandria through the Red Sea was inferior to the same spices that reached the Mediterranean by land, though in smaller quantities:

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<sup>53</sup> *Orlando Innamorato*, Book II, Chapter II, obs. on 39.

<sup>54</sup> *Il Volo Di Astolfo Sull'Ethiopia Nell'Orlando Furioso*, in *Rendiconti Accademia Lincei*, scmor. 1932, pp. 19-38.

<sup>55</sup> Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, ed. by L. Fodcolo Benedetto, Florencre 1928, pp. 212-213. Cf. also cit., Wor., pp. 180; p. 195.



«Creditur quod hoc fiat quia hebent conducentes ipsum (cinziber) longius viagium seu iter per mare quam qui conducunt de partibus Tartarorum, quia Cinziber est merces quae facile devastatur».<sup>56</sup>

From this position of Aden on the Red Sea one, thus, passes to the scheme of blocking the traffic in Aden. The scheme was formulated by the singular and probably enigmatic figure of the Prelate, William Adam, who wrote his book *De Modo Sarracenos Extirpandi* in 1317 and in which he openly and violently attacked the Genoese, while Marin Sanudo was more prudent in his moves. The problem was always the same: the necessity of impeding exports of strategic materials like timber, lead and tar which were essential for the construction of ships to Muslim countries, and especially to Egypt. Marin Sanudo had once more repeated it;<sup>57</sup> William Adam also said so at the beginning of his diatribe, in which he accused the merchants of Alexandria, *Maxime Januesnses* of the horrendous crime of serving and instructing the Egyptian navy «*se eis jungunt ad exequendum navale officium et piraticum, ad expoliandum Christianas vel eciam captivados*».<sup>58</sup> The pro-Venetian controversialist directed his harsh accusations against the Genoese Segurano Salvago, who had received so many favours and prestige in Cairo to the extent of being called ‘*the Sultan’s brother*’ and who, for the sake of keeping this position did not forget to supply, just as his own countrymen did, young, well fed and well trained slaves for the benefit of satisfying the particular preferences of the dignitaries of the Court. Not only this «*In tantum est Sarracenus quod ipse permisit predicta peccata contra naturam in suis navibus perpetrari*».<sup>59</sup> It was not only Segurano Salvago and the Genoese

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<sup>56</sup> Marino Sanudo, *Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis, In Gesta Dei Per Francos*, ed., by Bongars, Hannover 1611. Vol. II, p. 23.

<sup>57</sup> Narino Sanudo, cit., Wor., p. 25: «*Et cum in terra Aegypti non nascuntur lignamen, ferrum, pix, per quod navigium aliquot posset ad perfectionem perducere, cum Saraceni non possent aliunde habere nisi per mare nostrum, si navigium non haberent, terra Aegypti male posset durare et specialiter Babylonia et Kayrum*».

<sup>58</sup> Guillelmus Adae, *De Modo Sarracenos Extirpandi In Recueil Des Historiens Des Croisades. Documents Armeniens*, Vol. II, p. 523.

<sup>59</sup> Guillelmus Adae, cit., Wor., p. 525.

who were resident in Egypt; but also are the children of the Genoese Benedetto Zaccaria, the prince of Shio in the Aegean Sea, an island *«in via media sitam de Tartaria imporii aquilonaris et Constantinopolis, de quibus imperis predicti pueri extrahuntur Alexandriam, ut predictur, deportandi»*.<sup>60</sup> Here returns, as an indirect hint, the importation of human merchandise too dishonourable for Shio base. And *«Januences qui in ea dominantur, euntibus in Alexandriam cum predictis dampnabilibus mercibus multa dampna et offensiones et insidie preparantur ed inferuntur»*.<sup>61</sup>

How can one validly set oneself against this Genoese operation? William Adam describes the geographical position and hence the strategy of Aden, that has *«ex una parte habet gulfum maris Indici et ex altera Mare Rubrum, ad quod itur de predicta civitate per quoddam strictum quod est quasi alveus fluvii»*,<sup>62</sup> Bab al-Mandab. By and through Bab al-Mandab strait passed Indian merchandise and followed the Red Sea to Egypt, and thus William Adam presented the list: pepper, ginger and other spices, gold and precious stones, silk and fabrics of great value dyed in Indian colours. Just as food passes through the narrow constriction of the throat to reach the stomach, so the strait of Bab al-Mandab commanded the traffic to Egypt and the prosperity of the sinful Genoese traders. *«Unde igitur malum provenit, ibi contra morbum remedium apponatur»*.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, a naval squadron to block the Red Sea entrance was needed in Aden. Moreover, this needed to be done immediately because the Genoese had already tried to assure their supremacy even in this sensitive sector. They, as a matter of fact, obtained from the Persian emperor, Argun of the Mongol dynasty (who reigned from 1284-1291),

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<sup>60</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 531.

<sup>61</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 531 Ibidem, William Adam even had said later (cit., Wor., pp. 525-526): *«Unde hoc veraciter est compertum quod vix sit Janue aliqua nobilis parentes, neque alicuius valoris sit aliqua popularis, cujus aliqui Alexandriam erint vel miserint quorum aliqui pueros, aliqua prohibita portaverint. Cum productus Seguranus decem millia pueros Sarracenis portasse dicatur, nec multitudo nec numerus sciri potest quos alii portaverunt»*.

<sup>62</sup> Gullelmus Asae, cit., Wor., p. 549.

<sup>63</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 550.

two galleys for going down the Persian Gulf, through the Euphrates and from there to the Strait: it is a very interesting piece of information because it is proof that Genoa operated and conducted its affairs in Baghdad for the sake of defending its own land route guaranteed by a little favour from Egypt regarding its curtailed trade. However, as noted by William Adam, the Genoese endeavour would have succeeded if the Genoese who should have put it into practice in Baghdad itself, had not been carried away by a disagreement and a partisanship «*qui consuevit Italicos perturbare. Dicentes enim isti se esse Gebellinos et illi Guelfos, mutuo se occidentes subito ad nichilum sunt redacti*».<sup>64</sup> How were they to procure ships for the squadron destined to stay in Aden? The construction of galleys in Aden itself was excluded for fear of compromise and of involving themselves with the merchants of Aden who had a great deal of interest in trade with Persia as well. Therefore, there remained three places to choose from: Hormuz, the Laccadive Islands and Bombay.<sup>65</sup> In those shipyards where it was easy to find suitable materials, the ships were built for the blockade of the Red Sea; and if Aden happened to be lost as a base, the other two could be used for supply and refuge: Hormuz or the island of Qayas, both under Persian domination.

Nevertheless, these undertakings and manoeuvres became futile when Genoa was defeated by Venice at the Battle of Chioggia (1380) and the Turin Peace Treaty established Venetian supremacy. From then on traffic through the Red Sea fell into the hands of Egypt and Venice, even though Egypt never consented to the building of Venetian vessels or to their navigation there. During this period direct Venetian contact with Ethiopia took place; and Venetian trade prospered and reached its apex with the countries beyond the Red Sea.

This period of splendour came to a close at the end of the XV century due to the discovery of the route to the Indies around the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese Vasco da Gama, and some ten years later,

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<sup>64</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 551.

<sup>65</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 552

in 1517, the conquest of Egypt by the Turkish Sultan Selim lessened the importance of Egypt in the political and economical needs of Venice. The route of the Gulf of Suez and the Red Sea thus remained closed to the hub of traffic, and became confined to local trade. It remained so for more centuries up to the time of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and has only been threatened in our own times by new political crises and the new evolution in shipbuilding.

#### 4. ***THE QUESTION OF THE INCREASED KORAN AND THE ANALOGOUS DOCTRINES IN JUDAISM AND ORIENTAL CHRISTIANITY***<sup>+</sup>

Already in one of the first medieval Ethiopian literary works, the *Kebra Nagast* (*the Glory of Kings*, a book written between 1314 and 1322 to narrate the origins of Ethiopian monarchs starting from Solomon and Queen of Sheba), appeared a singular doctrine: The Law, which Moses received from God in Sinai, and the Ark of the Covenant contained within it, were created by God before the creation of the world. The creation of the Law was, therefore, *ab aeterno* and precedes the *Fiat Lux* of the Genesis. This doctrine was told solemnly, in *Kebra Nagast*, to the Bishops by St. Gregorius the Illuminator, the Apostle of Armenia: this is historically important. Even, at first glance, it appears amazing that the Armenian Apostle already appears at the very beginning, as a protagonist in the secret book of the faraway Ethiopian dynasty. St. Gregorius the Illuminator refers to the words pronounced by God in *Kebra Nagast*:

«And I take an oath upon myself and Zion that the Ark of my Covenant, the Ark which I have created as atonement and redemption of man and I shall make it descend as such in your race that I shall be gratified by the offers of your children on earth. And this Zion shall dwell with them, as the Ark of my Covenant in eternity. Again, when a cloud comes, so that they may not be afraid and may not believe it to be a deluge, I shall make the rainbow descend from the dwelling place of Zion, the Ark of my Covenant, which shall crown the Tabernacle of my Law. And when their sins multiply and I start to be angry with them, I shall remember the Ark of my Covenant and shall put the rainbow and shall calm my wrath and shall mend my mercy. I shall not forget my word and

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<sup>+</sup> *Atti Del [I] Convegno Internazionale Di Studi Etiopici*, Lincei Academy, Rome 1960. pp. 22-27.

neither shall the word that hath come out from my mouth be denied. The sky and the earth shall pass, but my word shall not».

At that moment the Bishops who were present addressed themselves to the blessed Gregorius and said to him: «So now we have clearly understood that He has created the Ark of the Covenant before any other creatures and even before the Angels: and before the skies and the earth and before the firmament and the abysses. This Ark of the Covenant is the one which is in heaven and moves on land. And they turned to him and said: Yes, the Ark of the Covenant had indeed been created *ab initio*; and neither is a lie in Your truthful Word, which is right and exact and immutable.

«Before all He created Zion, the dwelling place of His glory, and the wisdom of His pact was in His words: I shall clothe the earthly meat of Adam and shall appear to all those I have created with my arms and with my word. Had not Zion descended from heaven and had He not clothed the meat of Adam, the Word of God would not have appeared and we would not have had redemption. The proof is in the similarity: the celestial Zion is similar to the Mother of the Redeemer, Mary, in fact Zion, the Ark, is built and in it the ten words of the Law written by His own hand are laid; and thus dwelt the Creator himself in Mary's belly for whom everything was».<sup>1</sup>

And again in the following passage: «Zion, the Ark of Law of the Lord who was the Creator and the Supreme Architect, He himself, in the Sacrament of His Temple, before all the creatures, before the Angels and before man».

The concept expressed here and attributed to the Illuminator of Armenia, is that the creation *ab aeterno* of the divine Law, has once more been specified in the same text of *Kebrä Nagast* «The ten Words», as the Ethiopian text says, «written by the fingers of the Lord and laid in Zion,

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<sup>1</sup> C. Bezold, *Kebrä Nagast. Die Herrlichkeit Der Knige*, In Abhandlungen Der K. Bayer. Akademie Der Wissenschaften, 1 Kl. XXIII Bd., München 1905, chap. 10-11.

the Tabernacle of the divine Law»;<sup>2</sup> the Law, is, as has been said, «the first and the last», similar to and as *primogenitus omniscreaturae* as the Word of God. But the Word incarnated «and the second Adam was born in the Meat of the second Zion, that is to say, our Redeemer Jesus Christ».<sup>3</sup> Hence, we have the two births of the Word, the *ab aeterno* one and the Birth (on land), parallel to the two beginnings of the Law, the *ab initio* and the one of the actuation of the Pact for Christ's mission on land.

This symbolism calls to mind, after closer examination, a fundamental question of the historical theology of Islam: that of the Koran, the divine Law, increase or created; the question that exploded in the fight against the *Mu'tazilites* in IX century in a very tragic manner. Could the Ethiopians have known about that bold dispute and could the doctrine of the increase Law, later accepted by Muslim orthodoxy, have a common derivation with «the Ten Words», the *ab initio* law created before the world, in Ethiopian doctrine? Though, at first glance, this query seems improbable, it instead appears to have an affirmative answer. In fact, Severius of Ashmunayn's tract on the History of the Councils which he compiled in Arabic in the second half of the X century in Egypt, when the dispute about the created and the increase was still relatively recent in the Muslim world, contained an important digression on the *Mu'tazilah* doctrine. Granted that Severius of Ashmunayn looked at the question from the Christian point of view; and consequently assumed a position against the *Mu'tazilites* in favour of the orthodox Muslim doctrine; he considered the Word (the Koran, for Muslims) as Logos (the second person in the Trinity of Christianity), and in such a sense he enunciated: «the Ashma'at Jews and the majority of Christians and all the Muslims say that the Word of God is *ab antiquo* and not created. Instead, the 'Anayat Jews claim that the *Mu'tazilite* Muslims declare that the Word of God is a creation, in a

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<sup>2</sup> Cit., Wor., chap. XCIV.

<sup>3</sup> Cit., Wor., chap. I.

later period, and delimited in space».<sup>4</sup>

The 'Anayat Jews are, undoubtedly a graphical alteration, which is easy in Arabic, for 'Ananiyyah, and that is the *Qaraites*, the followers of 'Anan bar David, considered the head of *Qaraites* school in the second half of the VIII century, So «the Ashma'at Jews» were another graphic formation, because *Isma'iliyyah* was the follower of Ismael of Akbara and then of Sa'adya bar Joseph (Sa'id al-Fayyumi), the founder of the anti-Qaraita school, the compatriot and the contemporary of Severius of Ashmunayn. The writings of Severius of Ashmunayn were translated into Ethiopic and divided into two parts, as found in two D'Abbadie's codices, one from the XV century. The Ethiopic was mainly unpublished, but it contained the subsequent excerpt in which the position of the Mu'tazilite school on the secondary problem was specified: whether the Word of God being created is accidental or substantial. Translated from the Ethiopic: «The ones of the Mu'tazilites who say that the Word of the Lord is substance are a fraction of Mu'tazilite Muslims. They are Abreham Weddus (Ibrahim an-Nazzam) and his partisans. But the majority of Mu'tazilites instead say that the Word of the Lord is attributed (accidental). And we, from our part, say to the Mu'tazilite sect and to Abreham Weddus: Why not just tell us about the Word.

«If the Word is substance, it has length, width and depth; or does it not have length, width and depth? Since you Mu'tazilites say that each and every body has length, width and depth and these attributes are found in any body, so we tell you: How could the body that is found in Amsal at the same time appear in Rey, how do they agree with each other? If Abreham Weddus says: This body belongs to Amsal and has length, width and depth, but is far away within the space from Rey; we must give a brief answer: if the World is Amsal's and suits Rey's. And, if he answers that being it is Amsal's it cannot be Rey's, here we see instead the Word of

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<sup>4</sup> Sévère ibn al-Moqaffā', *Histoire Des Conciles (Second Livre)*, I. Edition Et Traduction Du Texte Arabe by L. Leroy; II. Etude De La Version Ethiopienne, by S. Grebaut, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, VI, p. 535. Re'Ananiyyahs Cf. art. by J. Vajda in *Encyclopedie De Islam*, II ed. s.v.



God being contemporarily read being Amsal's and Rey's in Cairo and in other cities. Thus, he would be a body that would be present in various places at the same time.

«And if the Word of the Lord is, therefore, neither body nor an accident, so we have the result that it is a substance (*Bahrey*) and that this very Word existed in the existence of Who emits it; and, therefore, the Creator has already had the Word in himself when He was creating, saying to what there was not: Be! and it was».<sup>5</sup>

The Word, according to the Ethiopian translator, existed before the Creation because God has created the world by the Word, by the Creative «Fiat!».

Thus, we have evidence that the polemic on the Creation or the pre-Creation of the Word of God –‘the Koran’ in Islam - was already established and used in Egyptian and Ethiopian Christianity, which Severius of Ashmunayn noticed in the X century as a link between the Muslim polemic and the Christian theological doctrine regarding Logos with the Judaic theological discussions. This is an important point for culture and the history of the Eastern world.

It does not end here. The Word of God, (namely and respectively in Islam, in the Koran and in Judaism, was the Mosiac Law) to the disputed origin of *ab aeterno* was added his own second ‘birth’: and the revelation to Muhammed for the Muslims and the Koran compiled; the revelation to Moses on land of Sinai and the Tablets of Law. Thus, to eternity for the Christians, unlimited by time by the Word, and the second person of the Trinity and the *primogenitus omnis creaturae*, follows, within time, the birth of the Incarnated Word from Mary. This justifies the Ethiopic Kebra Nagast in its passage, already cited, which identifies «the similarity» (Amsal) between the Virgin Mary and the Ark of the Covenant. The Arc contained the Law, the Word of God, as Mary had Jesus in her belly in the Incarnation: «Our Lady Mary was similar to the celestial Zion because the Lord dwelt in the Virgin's belly and was born to

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<sup>5</sup> Cit., Wor., pp. 629-627

her without a human marriage, as the Ten Words of the Law were «written by the hand of the Lord and laid by Him in Zion, the Tabernacle of the Law of the Lord».<sup>6</sup>

From this similarity «Mary = the Ark of the Covenant» it was easy to proceed further, even if Kebra Nagast had already presented an attenuated version of this symbolism: The Lord created the Ark *Ad Initio* in heaven and then He showed it to Moses thus, making another one on land, similar to that Ark which is in heaven»: <sup>7</sup> a symbolism which corresponds in Islam to the increase celestial Koran with the Koran revealed to man and becoming operational Law on land. Thus, and as a consequence, we easily pass, while applying this symbolic language in the Christian theology, to the concept of Mary who «according to Zion», is named for instance, in Za-Mika'el Aragawi's Gestures, «Our Lady Mary the daughter of Hannah and Joachim, who was chosen before the creation of the world». <sup>8</sup> And furthermore, having developed for reasons already talked about elsewhere, the other symbolism «Mary = Pearl». <sup>9</sup> The Gestures of St. Hannah, the other Ethiopic-work of the XIV century, says the Pearl, who is Mary, was created before the world and the empyrean. The Pearl Mary had been deposited by the Lord in Adam's loin and was transmitted into Israel, from Adam up to Hannah. Only once did the Lord show the Pearl to Moses «ordering him to build the Ark». <sup>10</sup> The affirmation of the creation of Mary before the world is found in these doctrines. This affirmation is found expressed in one unpublished Amharic hymn contained in the manuscript of my own collection and which actually says:

You exist before the sky and the land, Oh Mary;

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<sup>6</sup> C. Bezold, Kebra Nagast, cit., chap. XCV.

<sup>7</sup> Cit., Wor., chapter XVII and CIV.

<sup>8</sup> *Atti Di Za-Mika'el Aragawi*, ed. by I, Guidi, in *Memorie R. Accademiace*, Sc, Mor. 1895 p. 54: በስሙ እግዚአብሔር ወልድ ዘተወልዶ እምእግዝአትነ ማርያም ወለተ ሐና ወኢያቂም ዘነሪያ እምቅድመ ዓለም

<sup>9</sup> *La Literature Ethiopienne Dans L'histoire De La Culture Medievale*, in *Annuaire De L'institut De Philologie Et D'histoire Orientales Et Slaves*, Brussels. XIV, 1954-1957, pp. 20-23.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *My Storia Della Letteratura Etiopica*, Milan 1956. pp. 57-58.

The sun and the moon have not preceded thee.<sup>11</sup>

The Kebra Nagast, which as has been seen started from the first notion of 'similarity' between Mary and the Arc - be it according to this book, a point of departure or according to a rather orthodox re-elaboration of the already current ideas - is, whatever it may be, a written literary work, of northern Ethiopia, in Tigray, and was under the auspices of a Tigre head. The Book of Mysteries from heaven and from land<sup>12</sup> which expresses the doctrine of the primordial white falcon which, having been founded by the sun, gives birth to the very pure Pearl, was also written in the North of Ethiopia. And, that which is more important, the life of St. Hannah, who identified in Mary the primeval Pearl transmitted from Adam to Hannah for generations, was also written in Tigray. It contained a rather unique expression, originating from Gunda Gundi without an iota of doubt, which was at the centre of the heretic Stephanite movement and also bore miniatures of Stephanite saints, like the ones in Abba Kerazum.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, this doctrine about the existence of Mary before the creation of the world corresponded to a complex of ideas which were affirmed in the North of Ethiopia in the XIV century and which were adopted and diffused by the heretic Stephanites, against whom the Ethiopian Church nourished resentment.

The edition of the tracts on the Mika'elite doctrine and the first outcome of research on the Stephanites told that Zare'a Ya'qob had then to fight fiercely in the XV century. Negus, who was the fierce assertor of the official doctrine of the Ethiopian Church against the Mika'elites and the Stephanites, proved, against current ideas, how the history of the

<sup>11</sup> እምቅድመ ሰማይ ወምድር ሀልዎትኪ ፀሐይ ወወርኅ ኤቀድመኪ.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Storia Della Letteratura Etiopica*, cit., on pp. 52-56.

<sup>13</sup> So were in fact the miniatures of (the only) codes of law reproduced in colour found in E. A. W. Budge's works. *The Miracles of Our Lady Mary And The Life of Hannu*, London 1900, tab. CVIII and CIX (and in black *Legends of Our Lady Mary The Perpetual Virgin And Her Mother Hannu*, London 1922, tab. X, XI and XII). They contain the images of six venerated persons like saints from the Stephanite heretics Estifanos, Abba Kerazum, Mazgaba Sellase, Simu'el, Ezra, 'Amda Sellase, all the images followed by the name ዘጉንዳጉንዲ of *Gundagudi*; so much so that the identification is absolutely certain.

Ethiopian Church was not at all inactive, and was not devoid of harsh and dogmatic battles, as it had been the case against those medieval heretics. So, this is a premise which regards the religious history of Ethiopia.

Nevertheless, beyond and above the local Ethiopian history, pertaining to this new data - a phenomenon of noteworthy importance regarding religious and cultural history was evident. One theme - the one of Divine Law which precedes or follows the Creation - which in a philosophical and theological argument in Islam in Baghdad during the zenith of the Abbasid Caliphate's prosperity; the theme was resumed with a Judaic hue and adapted according to the Judaic structure in the polemic of pro and contra the Qaraitis in Baghdad and Egypt. In Coptic Egypt, Severius of Ashmunayn assimilated it and discussed it within a Christian aspect while retaining the notes of his Islamic and Judaic sources. And from Coptic Egypt the theme, constantly being readapted, but always with traces of its preceding formulations, entered the religious culture of Ethiopia where it received new and original contributions, and returned after centuries to cause fights and repressions in Zare'a Ya'qob's kingdom, which was already stirred up in other places along his faraway march in various regions of the East. They are not only in a hereditary Christian community, but also in the assimilation of single religious problems, more evidence of Ethiopia's bonds with Mediterranean civilization, the characteristic of the development of Ethiopia's cultural history.

## 5. *THE EAST AND THE WEST DURING THE MIDDLE AGES*<sup>+</sup>

Rome unified people around the Mediterranean Sea, giving their various civilizations the order of its jurisprudence. This stable unity should not be compared with the highest lyric - the eulogy of Pindar - which was about Alexander's undertaking. The East was united with the West, thanks to him, by means of songs which had two motifs: ardent beauty and in the generously ideal. Even when there was disharmony between these two motifs during Alexander's life, as in Dionysian fervour in burning Persepolis, or, harmony as in the betrothal with Rosanna, an amorous symbol of the hopeful union of peoples; his undertaking could not last to found a political organism because states cannot be ruled with poems. But it should have been, instead, that fragile unitary construction was politically shattered during the fights among the Diadokes, and the lasting consequences in time and space, which brought Hellenic art to creation in central Asia at the border of the Chinese and Indian civilizations. All this brought the Greco-Buddhist arts and made them assimilate with Hellenic Art whilst enriching the very fecund centre of Alexandria with more elaborated and refined elements, rich with Oriental taste. Hence, a synthesis of East and West, in art and thought.

The other was Roman exploits and what they did to the Mediterranean world which had been united for centuries, the age-old tradition of the Roman union, later a serious and determining force in the history of the Middle Ages and continuing to this very day after two thousand years, a happy source of inspiration for the harmony of nations. This union, traced for millenniums, was invigorated by the biggest Roman contribution to the civilization of the world: jurisprudence. Jurisprudence does not mean a rigid ritual armour with which one coerces the human

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<sup>+</sup> *Oriente Ed Occidente Nel Medio Evo, Convegno Di Scienze Morali Storiche E Filologiche, 27 Maggio - 1 Giugno 1956.* The National Academy of Lineci. Alessandro Volta's Foundation. The documents of the Conventions, 12. Rome, pp. 445-458).

society but an art: the supreme *Ars Boni Et Aequi*.

From this union in poetry, to Alexander's undertaking, this synthesis of theirs in equity and law was *Pax Romana*. What did the nations of following eras retain and what new substantial contributions were exchanged in the history of their cultural relationships in the centuries known as the Middle Ages? This is the general theme of our Convention and also the various aspects that it has brought us.

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Christianity, in Roman law, which pervaded it from the start, renewed *ab imis* life in all its manifestations, individual and social, and in its every intimacy. The redeemer is the Way, the Truth and Life; hence, this indicated the inexpressible *charitas* which dominated all relationships between human beings and between man and the Divine, the beginning and end of individual existence, to which goals and meaning have to be allotted. 'Secol is renewed'. The Hellenic hero, Achilles, was represented by Homer, and while he was answering Odyssey about his inconsolability of death, he preferred to be a servant who would plough someone else's farms for a little food rather than becoming a King in the kingdom of the after-life. Later, in Latinity, Catullus compared the waning and rise of heavenly bodies with the light of human life and with that of death, the eternal night devoid of any hope of reawakening. St. Paul's word resolved Homeric melancholy and Catullus' torture of the infinite obscurity with sublimity: «*Oportet corruptibile hoc induere incorruptionem*»; where again the (oportet) is not a passive individual acquiescent to the supreme Will, but rather an agent of certainty of the virtue of love for which «*siout portavimus imaginem terreni portamus et imaginem coelestis*». Hence Christianity was a deep revolution because, no matter how one was used to repeating to the contrary sometimes, it not only pierced the conscience and so the life of a person, but did not hold full power on this renewed conscience of person and its reflection, through *Charitas*, in all and within the life of Christian society.

The individual's cultural and social life was later wholly and

explicitly regulated by Islam, which emanated from Arabia for the unification of peoples from the East as far as India and the borders of China with the peoples of the West, from Spain and Sicily to many parts of European and the African Mediterranean. And all these paved way for historical as well as current problems. Could the start of a relationship between Christianity and Islam have been the rapprochement with Islam in the future? The historical problem became clearer due to studies conducted which rightly claimed how much Arabia and Arab history as well as the Arab spirit had contributed during the first rise of Islam, and together regarding Christianity, through those prolonged and occasional contacts with Eastern Christians and especially with the Nestorians, did derive and was assimilated during the first rise of Islam. The diffused legend in the Middle Ages in the East and West alike, by the Christian monk Bahira the supposed mentor of Muhammed, hinted at an obscure part of historical truth. But this question about origins was alien to the discussions of our Convention as it also estranged the current one regarding future relationships between Christianity and Islam. A question today, though much discussed and generous endeavours being made for spiritual understanding, has to continue along the path where Christianity and Islam have been both reduced to a generic deism.

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And if these contacts between the two theologies are a meeting place and suggestive, all the same, as much as, it is bristling with difficulties, there is another complication, mysticism. It is chosen with an impetus of pure sentiments that is bent on overcoming every constriction and giving back to the analytical theological reason the very fervid heat of love, at the same time becoming closer to the Beloved Divinity, the subject and object together of the supreme affection. Generous and tempestuous flight when the wings that carry it reveals itself with a hue not unlike that of Icaro; hence this generosity and this ardent passion really gives noble status to the great mysticism, which is not always empowered to judge severely from above or from a straight line during

their flights of love.

Is there a historical relationship between Christian and Muslim mysticism? The Muslim mysticism rose in Iraq and the full name of its origin is Mansur al-Hallaj, one of the persons who had felt most the depth of Divinity. Iraq was once more the land of creative contacts. It is historically certain and possible that in eighth century Iraq Christian mysticism had immediately made its influence felt. It had not even excluded the arrival of currents of Indian religious thought into Iraq, directly, or indirectly through Persia. Whatever the solution one is apt to give this question regarding the first sources (and no one would object if it was contrary to the confluence, in the subsequent periods of elements of a different origin), one should never forget the real meaning, or rather, the singular value attributed to the historical question of the sources of mysticism; I would say mysticism is about an exasperated yearning toward the Divinity which gets intensified when it leads the soul to a very high temperature of fusion and which it therefore cannot leave. Thus, whoever imagines that mysticism, Christian or Muslim, will really answer that the origin for the path of mysticism is:

*A quella enterna fonte esta' ascondida*

*Que bien se' yo do tiene su manida,*

*Aunque es de noche.*

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The same intensity of love which is the essence of mysticism, naturally manifests itself artistically in poetry. When did mystical poetry, in the East and West, in Christianity and in Islam, become great? This question would seem to be naive indeed if with it one tends to understand that the aesthetic value of poetry harbouring a mystical argument is to be judged with measurements different from those normal ones. But certainly it has nothing to do with this. This specific poetry, while singing of Divine love which is the essence of a practical mysticism, naturally makes use of its sounds, of expressions, in a way that refers to, in a common poetical language, a mundane love. This poetry, sung for the union of the soul with



the beloved Divinity, naturally makes use of expressions which refer to, in common poetical language, a fusion, an identification and to the unification of initially different elements. Therefore, we are dealing with a poetry which sings - under the veil of strange verses - of a reality which has a nonpareil fervour. Where did the poet reach the summit of art? Certainly where the veil, though adhering to in toto listening to the deeply mystical, had its own artistically evident poetical reality, because it, through the miracle of art, is heard per se by the poet. Not, however, an abstract veil, hence cold and frozen, of an idea that had remained vague and far away in raiment and content from poetry; but two realities, one human and the other super human, which are shaped in the one and only love that unifies them in the other, and, likewise, as the mystical love of the poet which exalts his own soul till he is unified with the keenly coveted Divinity.

In the West, there is the exquisite tenderness of a great Saint and higher mystical poet like Juan de la Cruz; as in the East, there is the gentle delicacy of a poet like the Persian Hafiz. Because this great poetry reached the apex of obviousness of representing the real, it may only have been a veil of which the perplexity and doubts in the minds of interpreters and critics who are unable - regarding art! - to discern, in the heated material of mystical love, allegory and reality. And so they write about this or that mystical poet in profane lyrical love only, or in sacred lyrical love only, in this or that song which is a Unitarian cry of ardent love for a real poet discerned as if it were the only reality.

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If mysticism expresses thirst for divine love which is one of the necessities of human spirituality, another aspect of that spirituality is the immensity between man and the Divine and not believing in the possibility of getting through it except by hereafter, pleasures and subsequent admissions with deeper knowledge. Thus, we have Gnosticism. In mysticism, when it descends from individual sentiment to a positive order of groups as happened, for instance, in Islam, pleasures are

allowed. But this progression, instead, in different systems of Gnosticism, is not an amorous surmounting, but that of conscience, and is understood to be tantamount to gain.

The gradualness of human knowledge corresponds on the other level to the gradualness of the manifestations of the Divine in subsequent emanations, and leads to naive complications which sometimes degrade into and toward a mechanic dryness and limitation of horizons, which could lead to a particular fanaticism due to an obvious psychological reaction.

Both Christianity and Islam have had Gnostic movements, which sprang up from one or the other sphere of the two religions, and often fought against the various forms and different systems these movements have caused for centuries. The most recent studies in this field have revealed, as it were, the philosophical and religious aspects of one of the most characteristic movements of this type in Islam, the one of the *Ismailiyyah*, born in northern Persia and with Indian Islam on one side, and on the other side, the Eastern Mediterranean Sea where the *Isma'illiyyah*, during the Crusades, «Vigil of the Mountain and his Assassins», were the treacherous enemies of the Eastern Latin combatants in the XII and the XIII centuries, later legendary.

Now, we can understand what philosophical and religious reality the legend of 'Vigil of the Mountain' hinted at. But regarding the complicated system of *Ismailiyyah's* Gnosticism, could some notions have passed to the West through the world of the Crusaders? As is the norm in science, this is a new and serious problem put before historians, as in the problem which recent studies on the *Isma'illiyyah* have radically resolved. Above all, it is correct to doubt whether and how far superficial ritual aspects or the most intimate ideas of the *Isma'illiyyah* system have or have not been known to the Templars in that period of most adaptation from the Latin East to the Syrian surroundings which historians recognise today as the end of the XII century up to the XIII century. At what point then do the accusations of the Templars that appear in documents arise, and cannot be resolved by retaining the systems dipped in the Eastern

Gnosticism? They are but sheer doubts, at least for the moment; but the atrocious tragedy of the Templar Order will probably be examined again from this point of view. And this will not suffice the (Spirit of the Soul) at Bologna, an important spiritual itinerary in the kingdom of the hereafter which was compiled on Arab courtesy at the dawn of the XIII century. It is understood to be in conformity with Avicennian philosophy, which had its own main centre in the Bolognese study. However, the Islamic scholar Werner Caskel believed in the recognition of that tract which traces *Isma'iliyyah's* Gnosticism, but, it is correct to say that not all agree on this hypothesis. In summation, let me prize a personal discussion highly: Henry Corbin, having examined the paintings by Ugo Monneret de Villard in the Palatine Chapel in Palermo, thought that it was possible to recognise in them certain *Isma'illiyyah* doctrines.

I have quoted these hypotheses and these vague directions of studies because it should clearly be known that the discovery of the philosophy embraced by *Isma'illiyyah* belongs to the global history of thoughts and art.

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The practised method of Gnosis is found allied with a dualistic conception in Manichean. Therefore, Gnosis, in its adapted form to the Greco-Christian method, became united once more with an old tide of Oriental thoughts, and properly so in the Iranian world: the un-amendable combat of the principle of Good with the principle of Evil.

So much of inherent pessimism, in the gnostical system is once more aggravated and, is rendered more bitter. The combat between Good and Evil, which is intimated in the human conscience for Christianity (and for Islam as well), is intrinsic in Manichean because it develops between eternal principles which are alien and sublime in respect of man, the crux of the drama. And the rigid almost arithmetical patterns of the gradual gnostical perfection and the myths of Gnosticism appear, on the surface, united in Manichean with a poetical appearance indeed of this superhuman war, in which Evil would not triumph except at the end of time and within

which man would assist with his ethically passive attitudes because he cannot cooperate in the great combat save by identifying Evil during his own terrestrial existence, and by limiting and renouncing.

The reason why such a doctrine has lasted so long, in time and space, with anxious peoples fleeing from combat and torturous bitterness of individual ethics for the sake of taking refuge in the illusion of collective moral questions which is necessarily resolved out with the visible world and outside the limits of time, is easy to explain. More so, because the same composition of Manichean gave method to thinking that this complex of beliefs was not directly contrary to Christianity or to Islam, but rather representative of a superhuman intellect and a more elevated explanation. In this sense, and owing to practical reasons, the Manicheans of various denominations made use of sacred texts, such as rites and Christian or Muslim ceremonies to suit their own Mani followers, and this without constituting intentional maskings, while a propensity to syncretism is inherent and is present in that religious doctrine.

That is valid also for the post-Manichean movements of the Middle Ages regarding discussions and perplexities of the scholars of our time to determine or negate the original Manichean. In this case, the historical question is still getting more complicated every day for finding referable ideas in heretic movements in a faraway countries regarding Manichaeism (I personally believe I have identified some in Ethiopian heresy documented in the XV century). Still the question of a specific study on the origins of this or that credo embraced by the movements adherent to the medieval Manichean is, in the interest of the general cultural history of the Middle Ages, which was surpassed by the evident coincidence of this negative conception of life in the East and in the West; which was an ostentatious religious form and a moral attitude. It was to be dangerously annulled in the individual ethics and social adaptation which made us revert to the deep meaning of Christianity had given and is still giving to the existence of individual man and to his liberty of choice from social lives of this land.

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Is this cohesion between the West (European) and the Eastern Mediterranean areas, described in the religious history of the middle Ages, also found in the history of jurisprudence? This question was specified affirmatively as the greatest problem in this field: the relationship between Roman and Muslim jurisprudence. The issue ought to be studied under its own light.

Incomplete as they are held to be in the epoch of tumultuous transition today, we however, should not forget that in the vision of the medieval man from the East or from the West the religious life and the social life are but one and one alone. In Islam this Unitarian vision forces jurisprudence also more firmly. But in Christianity the fundamental principles of jurisprudence, have to correspond, at least, with Christian social morals as well as with the supreme principle of charity. And so in the middle Ages in the West the return of Roman jurisprudence to schools and to the applied law was rendered historically possible by its identification with *Corpus Justinianus*, in which the Roman Jurisprudence was harmonised with the Christian one. So, on the other hand, post-Justinian jurisprudence in the Byzantine Eastern Empire continued, according to the needs of the eastern territories and the development of the Roman jurisprudence was codified and adapted from Justinian to the Christian sense. And with this juridical system of the Byzantine Empire, Muslims came into contact particularly when a great deal of territory of that Empire was incorporated into the new Empire of the Caliphs and came to be epic in the Islamic world. A relationship, therefore, was demanded between Roman jurisprudence and the Muslim one not generically or mechanically, but among the Muslim jurisprudence and within its various historical developments vis-à-vis what the Muslims knew about the Eastern Roman jurisprudence in each of these phases.

And now, to facilitate the contacts and hence the assimilation, another important historical datum is needed. The principle of the personality of the law, which we see affirming itself in the West, as a

historic consequence of the invasion of the Roman world by new peoples from the north, has found itself in analogous situations in the East. As a matter of fact, wherever the provinces of the Empire passed to the new formation Muslim states, a principle was applied to them and that principle was in the norm of «*cuius religio ejus lex*», which caused the coexistence of various applied jurisprudence in daily practice. Meanwhile, the possibility that new juridical relationships or the more complicated ones than those, which had been known hitherto by the law belonging to the conquering peoples, come to be better appreciated and regulated according to the judicial practice of the peoples belonging to the conquered states. Therefore, the assimilation of the Roman-Byzantine elements in Islamic jurisprudence are identified in the most recent studies, not really in the highest level, so to say, but in the most modest field of a judicial practice and in the notions of the Roman jurisprudence that the ones who practised it used to concretely have gained from.

So being specified as the general historical question, we should not ignore that that principle of personality of the law had the consequence of letting pass, be it in scholastic manuals and not as laws to be practised in the Christian Arab community, some parts of Byzantine jurisprudence, which later had a noteworthy consequence. For instance, *Procheiros Nomos* by Basil the Macedonian was passed to ibn al-'Assal's, in Arabic, in the XIII century and was later welcomed in the Ethiopic translation of *Fetha-Nagast* in the XVII century as the ruling jurisprudence and, as such, came to be expounded in schools for its adaptation with legal artifices in the Ethiopian life. On the other hand, there still remains for study, the system or better still the norms which subsequently regulated the Christian communities of the East, the monastic types, during long centuries under Arab and Turkish domination. One of the first studies on the statutes of the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem has shed new lights, not only on the internal judicial history of Christians in Palestine, but on the particular attention, in the interest of good order in that difficult region, the Turkish Governor gave to the relationships between one and the other Christian communities, providing them with particular legislation which remains

typical of that Empire.

Hence, the Christian peoples of the East had two functions under the Islamic Empire, namely, facilitation of jurisprudence for the passage of the Roman-Byzantine elements into Islamic groups of law; and the assimilation of elements of personal law of Muslim jurisprudence into its own law. This again is evidence of the historical value of Oriental Christianity.

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How did the Oriental and Occidental peoples react in the social and legal circumstances during two serious crises in their historical relationship in the Middle Ages, that is to say, during the Crusades with Western movement toward the East, and in the opposite sense to the seizure of Constantinople by the Turks?

The siege and the seizure of Constantinople by the Turks have been documented in economic history, by the publication of the Book of Accounts of Badoer Bank, which, told of the day-to-day economic life of besieged Constantinople which had access to Venetian politics during that decisive turn of East Mediterranean history.

Regarding the Crusades, it has become almost an obligation of some histories to outline the unclear politics of the Italian naval Republics and their roles in the expeditions of the Crusades. But these historians used to forget that the question presented, politically and economically within a particular form, an important matter for Italy, which was entirely Mediterranean and had vital interests in the Near and Middle East and in the traffic with those countries. The independence of Egypt continued for centuries to be a fundamental dogma of Venetian politics, whose economic decline, had its real downfall with the occupation of Egypt by the Ottoman Empire, which by closing the Red Sea route deprived Venice of any possibility of competing in the newly discovered seaway around the Cape of Good Hope to India. Genoa, in its turn, had to negotiate in 1290 its own commercial and friendship treaty with Egypt, through Seguran Salvago its capable representative in Cairo, and soon after it tried to take

one flow of its goods in the valley of the Upper Nile. It was completely another matter for both Venice and Genoa to undertake a Crusade revived, which in a final political sense of the Venetians and the Genoese appeared destined to create a temporary bridge for Western Europe towards Asia rather than substituting the states of those territories with one solid and organic political structure.

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The historical problem of the Crusaders reaches deep into the studies of today, continues assuming a more complicated standing, keeps on causing different hypotheses and hence leads to fruitful arguments. Only the legal aspect in our convention has been considered for now, and it seems to us that it improved the feudal system that the Crusaders took with them to the Latin East and to the states founded and kept by them. It had already been different *ab initio* for the different countries from which the Crusading Princes departed and it had been newly diversified due to necessities and conditions of various Latin States of the East, which the Crusaders were taking: from the Kingdom of Jerusalem, to the Principality of Antioch to the County of Edessa and to the Kingdom of Cyprus. Nevertheless, in the Crusaders' East and in feudalism itself, was noted - and very recent studies are clarifying it - an important phenomenon of reciprocal relations between socio-juridical institutes, which analogous historical circumstances had caused to rise in three different directions and which then came into contact in one way or another, in Oriental Latin states themselves. Firstly, the feudalism of the West, divided into the status which it had assumed in the southern Italian Norman State and in which it instead had in the fiefdom of the Lorena family; secondly, *Iqta* of Muslim jurisprudence imported by Islam from Persia; and thirdly, the Pronoia of Byzantine jurisprudence, whose outline was much better defined, compared with its consequences in the southern Slavic legal system, according to modern studies. This framework of Oriental Latin jurisprudence, seen for the first time in the systems of the Principality of Antioch which was a projection of southern Italian feudalism in the East,



can witness what value it had for legal studies of the Crusades in the history of jurisprudence.

Regarding cultural history however, the contribution made by the Crusades and the Oriental Latin states to the relationships of Western culture with the Arab one (or Islamic in general) is admittedly lesser to that it had with contacts between the two cultures in Spain and Sicily; I do not even see the outcome as negative. Besides legal systems, Oriental Latin states have made other contributions to relationships between the East and West, as revealed by studies conducted in recent years. The Ethiopian community in Palestine, together with its minor communities in Egypt, Lebanon and Cyprus, thanks to contacts during the Crusades and after - has mainly contributed, for example, in diffusing and localising the tale of Prester John in East Africa (which up to the end of the XV century was believed to be territorially attached to India). Prester John was an Oriental Christian King who was extremely powerful and exceptionally rich. We all know what an influence this tale must have been especially in the epoch of great discoveries of the oceanic ways until Christopher Colombus.

Furthermore, if we pass to the field of poetry and particularly that of medieval Europe, considering the recent hypotheses not accepted by all, regarding this or that episode about the *Chanson De Roland* who was concretely connected with the undertakings of the Crusaders in the Balkan Peninsula, the first positive results of the epic Songs of the Crusaders should not be kept mute, especially the *Chanson Chetifs*, recognised today as the deeds of the Syrian troubadours. The fundamental motif of this *Chanson Chetifs* is still recognised as the same epic tale of the strategist Manuel who is a party in *Acritic* epos. So, we have in Oriental Latin a link between epic French medieval poems and Byzantine ones, which refer to and specify places and facts in Syria and Lebanon.

On the other hand, I must add that these connections between the medieval epic poem in the West and the Arab narrative in the epoch of the Crusades still harbour many surprises and I believe it would be too hasty to anticipate yet, because I will identify them in my other works regarding

the Western epic motif of clear Oriental origin.

Remaining with the Oriental Latin states and the field of literature and poetry, there is doubt whether this Western epic material had partially passed to Oriental literature in the Middle Ages or not. Now no iota of doubt will remain, after recent studies have proved that the great collection of tales and stories in the 'Book of Mary's Miracles', an original French, Italian and Spanish narration, was translated from French into Arabic in the Oriental Latin countries, probably at Tripoli in Lebanon between 1237 and 1289, during the last phase of the existence of the Crusading States. A vast European collection of some hundreds of tales have, therefore, entered in this way into Arabic and Ethiopic, so much so that the referred to tales in Rome, at Santiago or at Rocamadour have circulated and are still circulating today in the Christian East.

And from the East toward the West, through the collection of the Book of Mary's Miracles, where have been included the tales relating to the Syrian sanctuary (the Melchite) of Saydnaya near Damascus and the pilgrimage patronised by the Templars. These tales reached Europe in Latin in the middle of the XII century and thus gave a motif in French, Italian and in Castilian on which the tales and the songs had been based until they became *Castigas de Santa Maria* (in Galician) at the court of the king of Castille, Alfonso X, known as the Wise.

This exchange of epic material, however, occurs in two senses in the Oriental Latin countries and its confirmation is one of the most noteworthy results of literarian historicity of recent years regarding relationships between the East and West. So, the Book of Mary's Miracles, whose tales would later variously inspire most European poets starting with Dante (the Episode of Buonconte da Montefeltro is *Mary's Miracle* to Lope de Vega, Schiller, Grillparzer, are followed today in the East and the West, each in its own language and univocally narrating the prodigies and the merits of the Virgin: from the apparition to Augustus the Emperor on the Capitol on the place of Aracoeli and to the prodigious recovery of the blind Sultan of Damascus, for which later on Atabeg Nur ad-Din, the haughty Muslim enemy of the Crusaders, was the first to pay

an annual gift to St. Mary of Saydnaya. And from this unity of the East and West in the name of Mary, the Wise King of Castile was inspired to song, by giving his very devoted love to Mary in the courteous tone of a lyric romance:

*Esta Donna que tenno per Sennor  
et de que quero ser trobador,  
se eu per ren poss 'auer seu amor  
dou ao demo os outros amores  
...Onde lle rogo, se ella quiser  
que lle praza do que d'ela disser  
en meus cantares, e se ll'aprouger  
que me dé gualardon com'ela dà  
aos que ama.*

Thus, rises the tradition of courteous jargon: for the sake of a profane love, which scales to Heaven, and for the sake of divine love, Folchet of Marsilia sang it in Provençal as if it were the only sound, which later inspired Dante of the Venus of heaven in his Paradise. This tradition gloriously came to an end in the thirty-sixth song of Paradise within Saint Bernard's hymn to the Virgin, whose daring antithesis and elaborated figures are the highest consecration of this poetic diction.

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Lyric poetry, Dante and Persia have also been the three themes of argument my Florentine papers and my own record of those too-recent discussions will not be recalled. Recent studies have thrown up the relationships between the lyrical verse tale and Arab-Spanish poetry in one new field: in the relationships between the metres of the two poetries and the strophic composition of the Arabic Zajal. From the lyrical verse tale, we have now passed to the study of verses and the strophes in a romantic language inserted into the Arab lyric of Spain. Most probably some other studies will have us proceed to another sector: such as the relationships between the quiddity of love in Arab philosophy and the theory of courteous love, the inspiring impetus of lyrical verse tales, and particularly, for example, between Avicennan philosophy and the first rise of the new style, suave lyric at Bologna.

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This synthesis at hand pertains, however to the relationships between the Western Christian and the Oriental Muslim essentially: relationships which each day the new field of modern studies in historical science reveals to us the inherence of exchanges, sometimes fertile, of religious attitudes, philosophical ideas, legal systems, economic order and artistic expression, to the highest human manifestation.

The studies that our Academy wishes to continue today in Italy, and which esteemed scientific institutions represented here impersonate, in various Western and Eastern countries, confirm them to be so in a lofty scientific language, as a sincere message, a civilised and fecund human fraternity, which only can save the Western and the Eastern civilisations from the difficulties faced today and bring about a new future of trusted certainty.

## II JURISPRUDENCE



## 1. THE CALIPHATE (1917)<sup>+</sup>

A long series of battles in the middle Ages in the West and the cause of conflicts between Church and State can be distinguished by the collision between two opposing and distinct elements, one trying to dominate without annulling the other, and without fusion. Therefore, when there was a given solution to a very serious problem in the Modern Age, it has become possible to separate the two powers and retain the Church within the sovereign State free to conduct its own activities within limits imposed by statal legal norms, and according to the formula defined by Cavour, or according to reciprocal relationships conventionally defined and agreed upon in detail. Solving an analogous problem for better or worse is unfortunately a luxury which common intellectual sluggishness cannot always succeed in vanquishing. Thus, when the European Powers found themselves in the crucible of solving the problem of the religious liberty of the Muslim populations existing in the Colonies, they found out that the religious entity in Islam appeared to be separate from that of politics, and found the Pope of Islam in the person of the Sultan of Turks. Suffice it now to analyse which were and which would have effectively been the authorities of the Caliph in Muslim jurisprudence to understand the dangerous in exactitude of such a doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Islam, from the dawn of its activities, was instead characterised by the confusion caused by those which are called the political and the religious authorities, and the zenith of these authorities were in the hands of Allah in heaven and of Muhammed as the Sultan on land.<sup>2</sup> When the Hegira and the subsequent constitution of the State of Medina closed, the

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<sup>+</sup> *Convegno Nazionale Coloniale* (Naples 26-28 August 1917), Naples 1917].

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Note (A) by C. A. Nallino on p. 209 by Juynboll, *Manuale Di Diritto Musulmano*, Translated by G. Baviera, Milan 1916.

<sup>2</sup> It has been said hereunder how the Prophet could not have had successors except that of political powers.

religious period of preaching by the Prophet already diverted to Mecca. Muhammed found himself as prophet and political head to those who believed in the revelations he received from God, and at the same time also the chief, the political sultan, of Jews and Pagans who depended on Medina. There was a dearth of power and confusion ensued, so much so that the divine revelations were helpful in defining religious questions and engaging mainly the Jews in controversy, the Pagans as well, on how to solve the political difficulty which faced the Prophet in the administration of his small state. So, Islam was defined as a religion that had detached itself from Christianity and Judaism as well as from the Medina State itself, and, therefore, had become an adversary. The passage of Sura 49 Verse 14 is characteristic of this subject, in which regarding the Bedouin pagans who had recognised Muhammed only as a political ruler, it is written: «The bedouin say: we are believers! Answered they: You are not believers, and therefore you should rather say: we have come to be a part of Islam, because faith has not yet entered your hearts».

While the Prophet himself was alive, and the Koran, the maximum source of future Muslim jurisprudence, had not yet been entirely revealed, the confusion of the civil and religious powers in the hands of the Muslim community Muhammed headed and had as a consequence, the right of formation of a series of political and legal norms which were at stake, emanated from the same religious norms. Wellhausen<sup>3</sup> has correctly noted that the Muslim State is a perfect model of theocracy. In fact, in the European theocratic models God dictated laws through the mouths of His representatives only in matters of religion, while the administration and the politics of the State were provided with laws emanating from human values. Islam instead is a State which God Himself administers, and in which also the civil law must be a revealed one and cannot be so except through a prophet. Therefore, upon his death, Muhammed could not logically have a successor in which his own particular religious authority was the crux. He was neither, on the other

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<sup>3</sup> Wellhausen, *Das Arabische Reich Und Sein Sturz*, Berlin 1902, pp. 4-10.



hand, worried about even naming a political successor, nor about establishing the constitution of the Muslim State after his death. When the Prophet died and the series of revelations came to a close, the function of his successors could not have been but fundamentally political and Abu Bakr was elected as the successor to the Prophet, besides being so, was elected as the head of the Arab tribe.<sup>4</sup>

These being the historical origins, it is obvious that the legitimate Muslim State cannot theoretically be headed except by one, the successor to the Prophet, at the same time ruler. This government has to be formed by all Muslim peoples of the right faith because the alliances of the right faith enjoins the necessity of oneness of the political regime for the good of the believers; and the Caliphs were likewise the successors of the Prophet and of the State which they ruled for the development of the primitive Islamic community, such as the State of Medina. Historically the constitution of a Muslim State independent from the Caliphate begins either with a heresy, which gives the religious doctrine the dogmatic basis of a political separation of the new State from the only Muslim State, or with a mere and only a formal recognition of the political sovereignty of the Caliph, in which the new Sovereign declares himself a vassal, even if only nominally.<sup>5</sup>

Hence recognising and accepting the duty of obedience to a Caliph is tantamount to recognising one's being as a part of universal Islamic monarchy, that is to say, being a subject of the political sovereignty of the head of the primitive Medina. Therefore, according to the Lausanne treaty and within subsequent royal decrees on the religious

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. L. Caetani, *Studi Di Storia Orientale*, Vol. III, Milan 1914, p. 327 and the following.

<sup>5</sup> So Persia adhered to the Shi'ite heresy to free itself from dependence on the Islamic universal monarchy; and thus the Rostemids (778-1171 AD) founded their own kingdom by leaning toward Ibadites; and the Fatimids (910-1171 AD) started their dominion in Egypt with the proclamation of 'Ubaydallah the Isma'ili as the Mahdi of their progenitor; and the al-Moadis (1121-1269 AD) were so called by the theological doctrine of Tawhid, and that their progenitor ibn Tumart also preached so (ibn Tumart as well was proclaimed Mahdi). The contrary example in, without having to cite others as the Ayyoubids and al-Murafids, the recognition of the title of Sultan which Bayazid (1389-1502) had requested from the Abbasid Caliph of Egypt. All these examples demonstrate, I believe, the theoretical unity of the Islamic State clearly.

settlement in Libya the Sultan of Turkey was recognised as the Caliph, and while it was believed that the Turks had implicitly recognised the much-discussed decree of sovereignty, it had instead really been one who had implicitly recognised the contrary.

What is the substance of the spiritual powers of the Caliph? After what I have said on the fusion of the political and religious elements in Islam, it seems to me necessary now to crystallise this crux so to demonstrate my proposals better. Should we happen to analyse the authority the head of a religion usually has, we will discover that the one who ought to be a religious head in Islam is nothing, according to the Muslim jurisprudence. He neither has the power of promulgating or modifying the dogmas of the religion, nor even claiming inspiration from an impossible new Islamic Revelation.

The same jurisprudence which in Islam has a common source with the dogmatic one, the Revelations are not abrogable by subsequent authorities.

Given this crystallisation regarding Islam, the dogmatic and theoretical jurisprudence are the results of elaboration by theologians and jurists of the first two centuries of Hegira which, having adapted to the new needs of Islam, came into contact with peoples of advanced civilisations, and because of rudimental elements and confusion caused by Koranic legislation, they became later coerced to trace the origin of their precepts through recognised sources. The justly sufficient and loyal reflection of these necessities for an adaptation of new needs to the unchangeable Islamic legislation is the formation of the tradition (*Hadith*). The other sign of these difficulties which were faced by Muslim jurists is the admission of other two bases for the legislative doctrine other than the Koran and the *Sunnah*, that is to say the system of consensus *Ijma'* and the analogy of *Qiyas*.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> We however notice how it was necessary to find in these two new source one original in the already recognized two sources; and then deduce from two passages of the Koran or from traditions which the Prophet already had had from revelations he made public regarding the legitimacy of the application of analogous process in the interpretation of legislative texts, and the

If the Caliphs had really been the religious leaders of Islam the formation and progress of the legal system and dogma would not have come without their direct intervention, as is in the canonical jurisprudence and the Christian dogma which were codified and promulgated by dint of authorities enjoyed by the Pope. The decree issued by Caliph al-Ma'mun (202 of Hegira) who officially welcomed the Mu'tazilite doctrine on the creation of the Koran<sup>7</sup> appeared too much to contemporaries and was a very singular happening in the history of Islam.

Regarding Muslim jurists, al-Mawardi<sup>8</sup> on the constitution of the Islamic State defines the function of the Caliph as follows: «The Caliphate has been established for the sake of succession to the Prophet in the preservation of the religion and for the sake of terrestrial politics». It is futile to insist on the meaning of the phrase «the preservation of the religion» which is not different, for example, from the title *defensor fidei* which the king of England before the Reformation was given by the Pope and which he has traditionally kept.

The powers of choice enjoyed by the Caliph which however had presumed a relationship with religious matters are:

a) The nomination of Qadis, who are the jurists according to the Muslim jurisprudence, which is a political sovereignty; and this would be, clear as it is, a very dangerous matter for legal functions to have to depend on a foreign ruler in a territory which is not his, even nominally.

b) Declaration of the holy war. Naturally, in countries which obey a Mahdi, the declaration comes to be made by this Mahdi himself. I say naturally because Mahdi, by dint of his functions according to the Muslim peoples' belief in eschatology, has equal or rather more authority than the Caliph himself. There are many examples of holy wars declared

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necessity of following the *consensus* of the community, by sticking to 'the path of the believers'. Cf. the recent developments later on pp. 405-408.

<sup>7</sup> It could not have been invoked instead as an historical precedent for the intervention of the Caliph in matters of Faith, by repressing the cited Mu'tazila heresy committed by Caliph al-Mutawakkil in 234 Hegira. Neither could the massacre of Barthelomeo make us believe that the king of France was the religious head of Christianity.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Mawardi (Abu-'l-Hasan 'Ali) b. in 932 and d. in 1058 AD.

by others rather than by the Caliph.

c) In the very early days of Islam, the Caliph used to lead the prayers in the mosque as Muhammed did in Medina. But later on, this charge was assumed by the Imam, who is not at all a devotee, but a mere mosque employee who could also be chosen from among Muslims. Theoretically, at least, he is not even a permanent employee because, any Muslim who answers the prescribed prerequisites of jurisprudence can lead the prayers as an Imam.

d) There remains also the invocation of the name of the Caliph in the prayers on Fridays. Now this did not make any sense in Islam except the one of invoking the protection of God to the political head of the country. It was rather considered as a sign of submission to a certain sovereignty<sup>9</sup> and abstaining from it could have been interpreted that the preacher was plotting against the government. Therefore, during subsequent decrees issued in the Treaty of Lausanne, the name of the Sultan was recognised as Caliph and continued to be pronounced in Friday prayers, and it was admitted that the natives had to consider a Turkish Sultan as their own Sovereign. So, by overlapping two inseparable elements in the conception of Muslim jurisprudence, and considering a religious Caliph as a different entity from that of the political Sultan, a happy ending was arrived at and it was admitted that the Turkish Sultan, making use of his legitimate right as Caliph, was able to declare a holy war against the Italians in Libya.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For instance, when the Ayyoubid Dynasty took over Egypt (1171 AD) Saladin ordered from then on that the name of the 'Abbasid Caliph had to be mentioned in Friday prayers as a recognition of his own submission to the said sovereign.

<sup>10</sup> [The following formula was then adopted in Libya: اللهم احفظ من حفظنا واحفظ من حفظ الدين 'Oh God, protect who protects us and protect who protects the Muslim religion. You are the Omnipotent'].

## 2. THE MUSLIM FAMILY<sup>+</sup>

It is very rare to find an argument like the one of the Muslim Family, either because it has been distorted by erroneous ideas or has been traditionally transmitted - or even because it has become a traditional ground subject to monotonous facetious hints.

Presto comes to mind, in a joyful air, of rich harem accompanied by impoverished guardians; or in a dramatic way, of a woman legally reduced to a state of serfdom compared with her own husband. Hence it is a desirable rarity to come across a concrete examination, besides those published by some specialists, of not only traditional Islam, but also about the reality of today which has been determined by life and modern tendencies in various Islamic countries.

So let us try to present some observations on the real state of this subject.

Two fundamental questions are posed: what was the legal regime of the family structure in the history of Islam; and, what are the modern day tendencies complicating the progress made by Muslim countries?

We know historically that at the time of the rise of Islam, Arabia was almost entirely ruled by tribal regime. These social groups, founded on a common descent of one progenitor, where likewise adopted persons and clients merged, constituted the first social unit.

The family, therefore, was essentially the political function because it constituted the first nucleus of the tribe; and families, while they were colligated on genealogical lines of a common origin within the tribe, were also able eventually, to develop and increase in number and power so much to the extent of transforming themselves into independent tribes. To this social order the Koran caused various and deep modifications, weakening at the same time the strictly patrician character of that bedouin

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<sup>+</sup> [Ulisse, a. XVI, Vol. VIII, 1963. pp. 111-118].

society.

### Types of Progress Enacted By The Koran

These modifications, therefore, paved the way from the age of nomads and camel-drivers to a more developed form of Arab Empire, under the Caliphs who succeeded the Prophet Muhammed, which covered a vast area of the civilised world from Spain to the valley of the Indies.

It is within these surroundings and in relationship to such social conditions that we have to consider the innovative norms brought by the Koran which were not restrictive when compared to legal systems such as, the woman in a family, but instead they rather constituted more recognition which would have been impossible or at least very difficult within the bedouin tribal system.

The hereditary quota assigned by the Koran to a woman as one half of the quota inherited by a male was an important reform, because in the societies which existed then in Arabia, the admission of a woman to an inheritance was excluded or at least was surrounded by huge and unfavourable guarantees.

For example, a woman could leave the tribe for marriage or if the contracted nuptial bond was dissolved, the tribe ran the risk of losing from the total of its own property those goods, be they real estate or movable, which were assigned to a woman as hereditary quota.

Furthermore, the abolition of the levirate which the Koran enacted was another progress enjoyed by the family over the tribe in the legal-social order.

The levirate systems in the Arab tribe ensured that the wife of a deceased brother was inherited by her brother-in-law; and the children of this second union were considered as the children of the first deceased husband. This depended on the concept of marriage which was considered a bond between the social group of the man and the social group of the woman; in that way the demise of the husband did not terminate the nuptial tie which continued between the husband's group, and the brother-

in-law. The Koran abolished this system decidedly, and by so doing, freed a marriage from its patrician order and paved the way for a personal and private bond.

In short, in a society where the assembly of a tribe was formed only by men fit for carrying arms, as in medieval Europe amongst the Germanic nations, it was necessary that those excluded from essential political organs namely the women and the non-armed, were protected by a *mundio* who was trusted with the power of protecting their interests. And thus Muslim law regulates who is supposed to be the titular of *mundio*; on the other hand, it accepts the testimony of women, also sub *mundio*, fixing its value at one half of the testimony of a free man.

In addition to this, albeit according to the relationship, the wife is defended against slanderous accusations through particular procedural guarantees.

We understand that this system of family rights which represented an evolutionary progress for Arabia where it was unveiled, and taken with the constitution of the Arab Empire to territories and very different countries, which in its almost entirety, and being a part of the Roman Empire or the Persian Empire for centuries, were now far away, in time and distance, from that organisation which had been a historical antecedent in the Arab Peninsula for a tribe.

It is from here, that the works of Muslim legal savants who from the VIII century on, kept elaborating Muslim jurisprudence, bearing in mind the practice of Roman jurisprudence, even if the concrete adaptations could not be but limited where the Koran had already given explicit and definite norms.

### The Contemporary Developments

Based on historically steady foundations which gave limited margins for change, the legal and social systems of the Muslim family, once constituted, remained constant for a long period of time; and evolved within individual countries according to their own customs and juridical

rites. In addition to their doctrinal progress, fairly applied casuistry came to be amplified in lieu of the structure and the fundamental principles which remained rigid. Now we have arrived at the great renovating movements of modern-day Islam, commencing from the second half of the XIX century to the two World Wars with their very serious consequences, only to find the imposition of new terms and conditions and sometimes agonising problems on family orders.

Here are some examples.

In the West, one talks detrimentally of the Muslim family and polygamy. Now in most developed Muslim countries, polygamy, even within the allotted limits imposed by the Koran, has, in practice, disappeared. This is as a result of economic evolution and particularly the elimination of feudal classes in most progressive Muslim states. One could say this is occurring in other more traditional countries as well. In addition to economic reasons, the accessibility of other cultures has also contributed to the status of women, beyond old wonts and customs, as has the continuous frequency of contacts with peoples of different creeds and hence the gradual acceptance of Muslim States in international and world societies.

We have to be careful because this is not equally valid for the whole Muslim world. There is the maximum evolution of some countries where legislation is decidedly inspired from European *modus vivendi*, a minimum in some countries who have not left the age-old isolation from Turkey after the secular reforms of Kemalite revolution, and the extreme of the Yemen and Saudi Arabia, where contacts with the outside world have, however, allowed only the beginning of strenuous reforms.

The abandoning of polygamy is nevertheless a fait accompli everywhere, but remains theoretically in the judicial system for obvious reasons of religious observation.

Moreover in Persia the «temporary marriage», once characteristic of Shi'ite Muslim jurisprudence, is no longer practised; the fact being that monogamy being still there and accompanied as in other Islamic countries by the ease of repudiation, which is in the hands of the husband alone but



which, when need arises, can be subjected, - socially, if not due to a norm - to redemption on the part of the wife.

### The Practice of Female Circumcision

But within this matrimonial regimen, which is in a more or less rapid transformation today, it is as well to consider some local problems, pertaining to sexual adaptations in a strictly physiological sense. They do not only have an immediate influence on nuptial life, but were also the next predictable thing to be resolved with total adaptation to the general evolution of Muslim society.

Here I am hinting at the practice of circumcision among Muslim nations of East Africa. This is still practised in Somalia.

For girls between seven and eight years of age, a delicate surgical operation is undertaken by one or more expert women. This operation consists of the removal of the labia major and the clitoris; and in sewing the resultant injury in such a way that there is complete cicatrisation save a passage for micturition.

This female circumcision obviously reduces the sensitivity of a woman to a minimum; and renders the necessity, at the time of marriage, for a special manoeuvre for the separation of the resulting scars.

From a physiological point of view, this practice was studied in French Somaliland by Jousseume many years ago.

Later, Princess Marie Bonaparte, having dedicated herself to psychoanalytic studies with burning commitment, brought the question into focus and wondered if female circumcision, beside its physiological consequences, also influenced the modification - and at what level and in what sense - of Somali girls' psychology. So a study was conducted through psychological evidence before and after circumcision in its various stages.

But alas! Circumstance did not allow Princess Bonaparte to put her commitment into effect which could certainly have been interesting. But it is possible instead, that Somalia's growing adherence to the general

evolution of the Islamic world would make the practice of this custom rarer and less practical.

It is not easy to tell what had been the historical origin of this practice and how it came to be retained, from the ritual point of view, as being the equivalent of circumcision for men. But we do know that female circumcision also was diffused in the north of Ethiopia among non-Muslim peoples. As a matter of fact Negus Zare'a Ya'qob (who reigned between 1434 to 1468) condemned it rigorously in his Book of Light, where, after having said that it was also practised by the Christians of Tigray in addition to Muslims and having described the details at the time of marriage as well, concluded by saying: «if you do this, you will be out from the Law and shall be estranged by God who has created man and woman in His likeness».

Hence, it would seem that it is an African practice, inherited by Islam, which has been given the sense of a ritual purity in Somalia.

### Birth Control

The fundamental and the most debated problem for the Muslim family nowadays is the one of birth control.

This problem is particularly serious when seen from two points of view: the first is the economic condition of social life in individual Muslim states, where the increase in population is unabated and the other is the clear-cut opposition against any practice for the control of birth rates from religious circles.

This opposition is confronted on the other hand by the secular tradition of large families which is considered the genuine force of the society.

Let us now see some most recent phases of this question in various Oriental Muslim States.

At first glance, it might seem that Turkey is a secular state and hence officially alien to the prohibitions of the Muslim religion, and could have been less contrary, on a global sense, to the new notions on birth

control. But now the question of population is clearly represented by the following figures: in 1923, the population of the Republic of Turkey was thirteen million and in 1963, after only forty years, the Turkish population had grown to thirty million, more than double.

The economic problem therefore is presented in its most acute form: and the official unemployment figure, which was four million and eight hundred thousand in 1963, indicates that it is an unforeseeably dangerous situation *per se*.

Furthermore in the past month of May, when the Turkish journalist Amber Bousoglou asked a Turkish doctor her opinion on birth control, her answer was very evasive: «We love children very much»; and her response to his persistence, as she herself admitted to LE MONDE newspaper later, was even more quaint: «Have you noticed that here when a family goes for a walk, the father walks in front, and immediately after him comes the wife with two children clinging to her apron, the little one carried, and the fourth son visibly on his way to this world. Birth control would transform the structure of the family and could diminish the moral sense. Besides, there is religion».

This appears to be the real and typical situation of one of the most progressive Muslim countries; and evident economic circumstance that prevailed.

Let us move into vast Asia, to the most populous Muslim state of Pakistan. Here the problem was alive; and the necessities were no less urgent, particularly in Eastern Pakistan and within the valley of the Ganges. But it preceded with great caution.

The President of the Republic, Muhammed Ayyub Khan, in a speech delivered in Lahore in March 1963, hinted at the importance of birth control, in answer to which public opinion was preoccupied in various senses.

Practically speaking, private institutions were on the move with propaganda in favour of control: and the government kept itself from direct intervention. It was true that, some years previously, the government before Muhammed Ayyub Khan's had even allocated a small

fund for 'the research and study of a programme of family planning', but nothing concrete was achieved.

Many a time this question was presented afresh by speeches delivered by the President and public opinion once more hotly stimulated; but even here it was not easy to take an immediate and open position, especially in a state like the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, where religion was the supreme bond that united various populations of the valleys of Indus and Ganges.<sup>1</sup>

The latest developments of this question in Egypt were not very different. Here the increase of population was really impressive. Within the ten years between two censuses the population increased from twenty million in 1950 to twenty six million in 1960. And considering the geography of the country with arable land limited within the Nile valley and surrounded by desert regions to the east and west, the progressive density of the population within this strip of irrigable black earth rendered the question more dangerous.

In Egypt there was an indirect official manifestation, so to speak. In May 1961, the Minister for Social Affairs, in a speech delivered on the occasion of laying the cornerstone for a kindergarten in Cairo, hoped that the project for the protection and guardianship of children, in the educational field as well as the sanitary, would be second to tutelage of the family. In this context the Minister suggested to those in charge of this project to «advise mothers to plan their child frequency». However, beyond this formally made invitation *perincidens*, as a gubernatorial action nothing was effected, hitherto.

An Arab journalist from Libya reported a news item that the Mufti of Egypt had declared that birth control was not a practice contrary to the Muslim religion; but the Egyptian press did not confirm this piece of news and therefore its veracity was doubtful. Moreover, had it been at least partially reliable, there would still remain the investigating of the exact terms of the original declaration. The news was still interesting

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<sup>1</sup> See further on pp. 395-397.

because it was proof of a situation existing in Egypt analogous to the ones in Turkey and in Pakistan.

### Participation of Women in Politics

In one other field resistance within some traditional circles was overcome, albeit with some difficulties, regarding the participation of women in the political life of the country.

This was indeed a daring and new reform where Persia again proved its originality in the modern concept of domestic life, a sign of deeper modifications of social structures.

The status of a woman in Persia, among other things, was always creative compared to other Muslim countries. The witty tittle-tattle which makes the Persians grin is famous. It is said that in a certain Bazaar of Esfahan the shoemakers sell a special pair of slippers with which the wives can beat their husbands at will. And in popular theatre the humorous farce about the donkey-driver who imagined himself to be free from the tyranny of his wife when she was liberated from the veil by modern reforms, attracted tremendous applause when he bitterly concluded: «with or without a veil, she is the real donkey-driver and I am the real donkey».

But between these jestful allusions of the official and affirmed judicial equality there passed an astronomical distance. In 1962 the Shah, according to a declaration, decreed that women were allowed to vote in a political referendum.

So there occurred in Persia, as expected, resistance launched by the traditionalists who clung to religious Islamic tradition to suit themselves, who claimed to have had been deprived of any liberty such as that allowed to women in the preceding reforms made by the founder of the dynasty, Shah Riza, the father of the current ruler. A compromise was reached to the effect of letting women vote, but in separate places from where men cast theirs. However, after having overcome this resistance, after the referendum and the crisis that followed, a subsequent decree gave Persian women the right to vote in political elections, permanently and

without restriction.<sup>2</sup>

These isolated episodes, which were particularly emphasised, were meant to show how the Muslim world, in its crisis of adaptation to new systems created by the Second World War, was in a crucible of progress, even regarding the structures of the family.

But the traditionally conservative ferocity, equipped with more or less similar formulae for combat, delayed the renovative movements here and there. Therefore, it was not easy at all to foresee when and on what extreme the evolution would reach its new and necessary equilibrium.

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<sup>2</sup> Re Pakistan Cf. hereunder on pp. 397-400.

### **III ISLAM IN ETHIOPIA**





## ***1. ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA<sup>+</sup>***

East Africa, as is known, comprises countries which are geographically very diverse as much as its groups of races, languages and religions. Hence, it does not have a common history, but different historical developments which have brought each country to a different cultural level. When talking about any historical problem, one cannot group them in an argumentative treatment especially when it regards, for instance, the Nilotic peoples (Nuer, Iambo and Miekén) who live on the western periphery and on the south-west of the highlands, in the lowest cultural status, compared to the Tigre and Amhara peoples, who instead had proper state systems for centuries, though feudal types. It would mean unifying the Nilotic with the Carolean epoch.

Therefore, touching upon the expansion and above all the historical function of Islam in East Africa, this analysis must, out of necessity, be divided into various zones. With regard to Islam, it would be more useful to pin-point three wide zones: the northern and central highlands where the Ethiopian Christian state fought against Muslim invasions for centuries; western Ethiopia, where Islam overcame paganism of the tiny state of Sidamo and the Oromo tribes; Somalia, to which Islam has been historically connected due to migratorial and commercial influxes from the basin of the Indian Ocean. I would just underline that this partition does not have any absolute value, but has only been made to facilitate the argumentative treatment that some regions and groups of populations are destined to remain excluded.

At any rate, in this book at hand, I preferred, instead of remaking the history of Islam within the above-mentioned three zones (which would probably make the subject a little too generalised) to assign each episode which was elicited first-hand from a determined historical moment and

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<sup>+</sup> [*Aspetti e Problemi Attuali Del Mondo Musulmano* (conferences and readings in *Centro Studi per il Vicino Oriente*, Vol. I) Rome, *Reale Accademia d'Italia*, 1941, pp. 74-93].

through the analysis of that episode, which would highlight the circumstances in which Islam lived and is still doing so in different ethnical and political situations.

## I

We are now in 1532 and the main Muslim invasion is on the Ethiopian highland. That Muslim State was the one which had always been obliged to move its political centre further to the East due to bloody wars against Christian Abyssinia, from Shewa to Ifât, from Ifât to Adal, and from Adal to Harar; testing its great force of insurrection under the leadership of its most intrepid condottiere Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim. The Muslims called him Sahib al-Fat'h *the Conqueror* and the Christians gave him the nickname of Gagn *the Left-handed*. Ethiopian Christianity was in mortal danger. Or as sung by the Abyssinian soldiers in crude but telling verses:

The sacred ornaments the Left-handed has destroyed,  
For the sake of Muhammed he removed the religious songs;  
Love for Mary he made it freeze,  
And the matab<sup>1</sup> from a neck cut it he did;  
And the stones of the altar in smithereens he reduced.  
While for the Christian warrior:  
A rage as if by honey mead infuriated,  
Spears as if by javelins played,  
A glory is to the remains of the vanquished indeed.  
To Shewa we make,  
And in Semien the rains abate.  
Like a foaming buffalo,  
And a roaring lion,  
Trembling, so the earth itself dry it will...

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<sup>1</sup> *Matab*, as is known, is a thread twist which the Ethiopian Christians wear around their necks and to which a metallic cross is kept pendent, as a symbol of their devotion, as has also been commemorated by the beautiful stanza meant for *Dajjach Kasa*, who died in a battle fighting against Muslims: For just a little thing, for one thread of silk, wounded and fell seigneur Dajjac Kasa.

And on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1532 during the great rainy season the *Left-handed* was already in charge of Dabra Libanos, one of the most important sanctuaries of Ethiopian Christianity, the seat of the *echagé*, the head of the monastic Orders of Ethiopia. And so Dabra Libanos was pillaged and put to fire.

While the combat with arms was raging so ferociously, there arose in Dabra Libanos, which did not neglect resorting to persuasion, what would be called today, a propagation. So we come face to face with one of the most interesting Ethiopian figures of the XVI century: he is the *echagé* 'Embaqom. This singular person, who had attained the highest office in the Ethiopian Church accessible to an Ethiopian then, was not an Ethiopian by birth, but a foreigner who had come from an Arab country. Moreover, he was not even a Christian; but, after his own arrival in Ethiopia, he converted (or reconverted?) from Islam to Christianity. Regarding his own and personal experience he began to write, while the Muslim invasion was at a free rein, a book: *The Gate Of Faith* on the relationship between Christianity and Islam. I shall say something characteristically interesting about this book, which has not been yet published in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Above all what type of argument did 'Embaqom invoke to assert his task? We can group them in two categories: the universality of the Gospel, and the Koran as the witness of the Gospel. In the universality of the Gospel, 'Embaqom, equipped with ability and not without an unusually wide vision, hints at some verses of the Koran in which is repeated the concept of the divine revelation made to the Arabs and to Muhammed as the national prophet of Arabia, and compares the Koran which was revealed for the Arabs and in the Arabic language with the Gospel's *ite et docete omnes gentes*, which is meant for all peoples of the land and in their own language. The Koran is witness to the Gospel, adds 'Embaqom. And this is the most salient part of his book: some verses of

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<sup>2</sup> This book has now been translated and published. Cf. D. J. Van Donzel, 'Embaqom. Anqasa. *la porte de la foi*, Leida 1969

the Koran are cited with an oriental polemical ability and as a reaffirmation to fundamental Christian teachings. From it one tends to understand, as often happens, the words of the Koran being so twisted and drifted to the most unexpected meanings and conclusions.

Suffice it to say that *Laylatul-Qadr* has been presented as if it were a Christmas Night; as the Koranic 'Light upon Light' has also been presented, with an acute polemical sense, as the Incarnated Word; a high-pitched victorious call of Islam: «When the aid of God comes and the victory» has been defined as a reference to the arrival of the Messiah, in answer to whose teaching the people «have entered the religion of God in thrones». To that extent, according to the undisputed ability of an ex-Muslim like 'Embaqom, the meaning of the first Sura of the Koran, the *Fatiha*, has been distorted to the Christian meaning and having translated it in full, the controversialist explains that «the path of those whom You have granted grace» is the teaching of the Apostles; and that «the path of those who err» is the one of the Jews.

So, if the Koran contains absolute evidence about the veracity of Christianity, is it because it is a revealed book? Why was Christian verity then repeated by Muhammed? 'Embaqom answers this query by narrating the famous story of Bahira, the Nestorian monk. Bahira, being also an expert in astrology and magic, taught these secret sciences to Muhammed, and according to the Ethiopian tale, he inspired the Koran in him. In the end he was killed by the Koreishites, who inebriated Muhammed at a feast and decapitated the Nestorian monk with the Prophet's sword, his own pupil. And Muhammed, believing in good faith that he himself was the assassin while in a state of inebriation, forbade alcoholic drinks. Therefore, 'Embaqom says whatever truth in the Koran came from Bahira the monk and whatever deformed Christian premise by Muhammed is, therefore, to be attributed to the Nestorian Bahira.

As a conclusion, this is a doubly interesting matter to us because, on one part it proves how 'Embaqom followed the Arab Christian sources, though not literary ones (Barrier's apocalypse itself, Syriac and Arabic, has a less vulgar character than the Ethiopian narrative); but it is rather a

popular tradition which has been accepted by the Christian communities of the Near East, and on the other side, hatred for the Nestorians together with the Muslims, has typically stimulated this tradition. Let us add the fact that 'Embaqom would, henceforth, cite another tradition, namely, a certain polemic between the Jacobite Christians and the Nestorians, in which the representatives of the two Churches explained their doctrines before the country's Muslim ruler, who agreed with the Jacobites. I believe that these events lead us to 'Embaqom's origin, which was Arab rather than Ethiopian, from one of those regions where contacts and hence, disputes between the Nestorians and the Jacobites was possible, that is, Syria.

To this part of polemic against Muslims there is a corresponding and apologetical part in 'Embaqom's book which defended those principles which were particularly attacked by Muslim propagation, veneration of imagery. Here, through quotations from the Old Testament, the principles of the Ethiopian Church have been clarified vis-à-vis Muslim ones: «We neither adore the altar, nor the image and nor the colour, but the power of the Lord who is there on the altar and on the image. If ever the Spirit of the Lord should abandon the altar and the images, they, being ephemeral things, would perish». However, and above all, the accusations of tritheism formulated by the Muslims are diffused where the dogma of the Trinity is concerned. The Muslim historian who chronicled the achievements of the *Left-handed* was shocked and related that the Negus had founded a church bearing the name of Makana Sellase: «And the Negus named it, with polytheism of theirs, Makana Sellase which means 'the house of Three Gods'. May the Highest God be exalted!

He is much higher than this! *Hosanna* to the One and Only, who has neither begat nor was He begotten and who has no peer!» and so this is how 'Embaqom defended the accusations against Christianity; and, so that we can have an idea about this curious higgledy-piggledy of ingenuous ideas and least elaborated thoughts which occur in this polemic, suffice it to say that he first resorts to the analogy of the sun, which has three names: sun; light; and heat. But soon after he cites the most naive

comparison of a letter sent to far away countries to give a friend words of affection. So whoever receives it has, hence, the words of a faraway friend, but the other one has neither deprived himself of them nor has he been reduced by sending them, nor the sent words have an entity per se, distinct from the one who has sent them.

So, explaining the dogma of the Trinity, 'Embaqom, after having said that the Son is preceded by the Father does not imply that He is inferior at all, and adds that thus the Holy Spirit is not absolutely men because it is perfectly equal to the three persons of the Trinity, though preceded by the Father and the Son. This extraordinary inclusion of *filioque* in the Nicene symbol, which had been taken as a motif by the dissidents of the Greek Church, is characteristic because the Ethiopian Monophysite Church ignores that addition, the typically catholic one, though never having subjected itself to any polemics. So the Catholic influence started to react to the anti-Muslim controversialists; we can retrace the same in contacts made by the Portuguese ambassador with 'Embaqom to which Francesco Alvarez was a party, and in which, in his report, he mentions the conversation he had with the abbot of Dabra Libanos who was a Muslim. This conversation, we understand today, must have had a certain influence on the spiritual formation of 'Embaqom which we can trace in his book in addition to some other signs.

This book on Islam, written in Ethiopia by a Muslim who came from Syria, and converted (or maybe reconverted) to Monophysite Christianity, but not without a trace of contacts with Catholicism, is very typical, therefore, of the religious standing of Ethiopia, where most different cultures have met and welcomed one another, even if contradictory, and without opposing and eliminating one another, but one superimposing itself on the others. This happened, we ought to remember, in a non-annoyingly declared manner against the belief of the country, but rather opting to be inserted in it gradually. One would err if one thought that this tendency to syncretism was religious indifference. On the contrary, because in the history of Ethiopia reaction has always been much more alert and violent due to the age-old religious isolation of the

Ethiopian nations, which has made them avid for the absorption of new cultural elements in their contacts with foreigners, which now seems to be openly threatened in its formal, integrity of beliefs.

## II

Islam among the Southern and the Western Oromo peoples of Ethiopia had its principal religious centre at Sheikh Hussein, in the high basin of Webi, within the territory of the Bali Government. There at Sheikh Hussein came an influx of religious pilgrims from all parts of the Oromo countries every year to perform rites, whose value and meaning was considered by the Oromo Muslims as tantamount to being *acceptable* rather than accomplishing a pilgrimage to Mecca, for those unable to cross the sea.

Who was Sheikh Hussein? We can only say with certainty that this Muslim personage lived prior to the XVI century, when the Oromo had not yet conquered the region where he is venerated today and it used to be part of the Muslim Kingdom of Bali. This tiny Muslim state, populated by the Sidama ethnic group, was mentioned by the geographers and Arab historians of the middle Ages starting from ibn Fadl Allah Al 'Umari who had knowledge of it in 1336. It is probable, in the absence of certain evidence, that in the epoch under question, Sheikh Hussein had long ago reached the level of godliness and that his tomb and the places of his life, which are today named after him, had been venerated by Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

In the first half of the XVI century the Oromo crossed the Ganale Doria, invaded and ruined the Muslim Kingdom of Bali, coerced the non-subjugated Sidamo to take refuge in the high mountains which demarcated the watershed between the Webi and Queen Margarita Lake. So, the Sheikh Hussein region became occupied by the Oromo; and they, being still pagan, assimilated the veneration for the Muslim holy man and subsequently disseminated him among their own far away tribe.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. here soon after, on pp. 335-344

How could this happen? Is it strictly connected to the Oromo tribe system? Within the Oromo tribe the political and authoritative abilities are acquired not individually, but as a group. Each tribe is divided into ten groups according to the oldest custom.

The belongings of a given group, for instance, of group 2, the son would belong, according to the oldest system, to another given group, No. 7 as an example, and the children of No. 7 come back to group No. 2. These groups subsequently pass, according to a cycle that constitutes the rule of the Oromo calendar, from one rank to the other political ability.

The lasting period of each group in each rank is, according to the oldest custom, eight years.

The group which is in the last grade but one, gives the head and all minor officials of the tribes, political control that passes from one to the other every eight years. At the moment of the diaspora of grades within the cycle of the tribe, there is the supreme grade, the one of *Jila*, which is acquired from outside the tribe but still within the Oromo ethnic group which gives some rights within the global tribe, apart from one's own.

This *Jila* grade is acquired by making a pilgrimage to Abba Muda. This person, «the Custodian of Knowledge» of the Oromo tribe, received pilgrims of various tribes who came to him and proclaimed them *Jila*, through some rites in which he appeared to them masqueraded as a lion (the use of animal masques, the one of a monkey for the first grades and the sacred ox for the higher ones is typical of Oromo ceremonies). Abba Muda lived in the oldest of Oromo seats: «he is the first amongst us because he never moved when we moved» explain the Oromo chiefs. He was in Dallo forest on the left bank of Ganale Doria, in the same region of Bali where Sheikh Hussein was». This explains why among the Oromo of the West it is said that Sheikh Hussein is the Abba Muda of Muslims. The traditional pilgrimage which was made by all Oromo countries toward the high regions of Ganale and to the high Webi to procure the degree of *Jila* from Abba Muda has only geographically deviated a little, towards Sheikh Hussein, where he had a Muslim consecration.

As is obvious, the pilgrimage rites to Sheikh Hussein commence



from this composite origin. The pilgrims followed instructions and performed rites which were modelled on the rites of Mecca, just to give them a more decisive Islamic character (in style) and for the sake of emphasizing the equivalence among the pilgrims to Mecca and to Sheikh Hussein, which (in substance) would be little less than heresy according to the Muslim doctrine. Thus, we find a sacred territory, which comprises various places considered sacred in the plain of Sheikh Hussein and in the surrounding deep valleys; and the entrance to this sacred territory is shown by signs, where the pilgrims stop to accomplish some rites. And as an imitation of the throwing of stones in Mina, which the pilgrims to Mecca accomplish on 10<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* and which is repeated then from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of the same month up to 70 stones, the pilgrims to Sheikh Hussein go to the so-called 'Cave of Sins', on the periphery of the deep valley of *Qachamsare*. From the threshold of the cave the pilgrims pass across two distinct corridors of minor caves. There they enter on all fours through the narrow opening and continue thus along the wall. And after having reached the anterior hall, the pilgrim collects some earth from the floor of the cave which he sorts out and then keeps in a pouch to be taken away for a devotion at the end of the pilgrimage.

Having then emerged from the 'Cave of Sins', the pilgrim collects some white stones, which are found accumulated at the entrance, throws them into the deep valley below one by one. After this act they consider themselves to be in a ritual state of cleanliness, as if they had accomplished the great ablution.

Beside these enjoined rites from the pilgrimage to Mecca, other Sheikh Hussein ceremonies are directly referable to Sidama and Oromo paganism. Thus the pilgrims visit 'the Cave of Snakes'. This is a cave on whose walls the winding of a water course has strangely sculpted something similar to an enormous python coiled around the walls. The pilgrims stop at the entrance and burn incense; and then accomplish a solemn visit of the cave. It is easy to see here the Islamized residues of the snake cult which is very apparent in Cushitic paganism. (On this very day the Sidama offer milk to some varieties of snakes; and the Oromo, after

killing a snake, make a special rite in appeasement). The pilgrims then visit the mosque which Sheikh Hussein had started to build during his earthly life: it is a mosque which has a dry stone wall with crude stones, where the death of the holy man is marked in the construction. In the internal small courtyard of the mosque a wooden gate leads to the inside where a phallic monolithic is found; and this attests to the paganism of the Cushitic people amongst whom the cult is very apparent.

In addition to this practice, already complicated regarding Sheikh Hussein rites, two others have added themselves in the history of two cultural and religious currents and caused new elements: the one of Harar and that of Somalia. The Emirs of Harar (the only Muslim sovereigns remaining independent on the highland after the Oromo invasion which had separated and submerged both Christian and Muslim rivals in long and exhausting battles which culminated in the *Left-handed's* undertakings), could not remain with hands akimbo vis-à-vis this pilgrimage which was being made within the periphery of their own territory and, therefore, subjugated the Oromo ethnic group. Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur, for example, founded in Sheikh Hussein a mosque dedicated to '*Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani* at the end of the XVIII century. '*Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani* is the famous Muslim holy man whose tomb is venerated in Baghdad and who claims Muslim confraternity of the Qadiriyyah, which is very strong in Harar. The Somali people, who border Sheikh Hussein's southern region, unlikely entered in contact with the organization of the pilgrimage. This organization was directed by a certain family called the Wau, which supplied the imams and the qadis of Sheikh Husseyn and who collected the offerings and provided all that was required by the pilgrims within the holy site (it is an interesting analogy with the functions of the Koreishites during the old Meccan pilgrimages!).

The Wau, thanks to these contacts, adhered to the Muslim confraternity of Ahmadiyyah, which reminds us of the mystic Ahmed ibn Idris, who died at Sabya in 'Asir in the first half of the last century and who had Zawiyas in Somalia, especially in the region of Merca. We can furthermore understand why the Wau of Sheikh Hussein preferred leaning

towards an organization which was leading to Mecca, rather than to the nearby Harar without being hostile but instead welcoming and facilitating donations of the Harari Emir in favour of his Qadiriyyah.

So we have examined the various elements delivered by the rites of pilgrimage to Sheikh Hussein, as the typical manifestation of the Oromo Muslim group. Islam, which came into contact with African social systems as well as with local religious ideas absorbed them without elimination but modification. Even today and with further historical analyses one can possibly discern - as we have done - some pagan elements common to the Sidama and to the Oromo ethnic groups: an earlier Muslim wave had already arrived in the region before the XVI century; and two new Muslim contributions had been made, one from Harar, and the other from the shores of the Indian Ocean.

### III

Somalia will lead us to the historical complex, and hence, to other problems. The history of Somali relations with foreign countries has been for centuries, rather millenniums, confined to two essential factors: the incense route and navigation, according to monsoon courses. Everybody knows of the importance of trade in incense, myrrh and their derivatives in the old world and during the medieval epoch, be it for use of incense in religious ceremonies, or for making perfume and essence. Now, save for a short and restricted area in the Arabian Peninsula on the Gulf of Aden, the exclusive producer of essence had been and still is Somalia. The traffic for carrying aromatic products was an impetus for regular contacts with merchants and foreign caravans, especially along the route that led to the Persian Gulf from the opposite shores of the Gulf of Aden, where the traffic made for Mesopotamia and Persia. On the other hand, the constant duration and direction of monsoon rains, four months in the north-east and four in the south-west, has in all epochs favoured navigation in the direction of north-east-south-west: from India, another large market for Somali aromatic products, and northern Persia along the Arabian shore up to Somalia, all on shore, exactly within the monsoon direction, as far as

Zanzibar.

Therefore, we also have to consider the relationships regarding the history of Islam in Somalia with the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf; with northern Persia and with India.

With the Arab countries along the Persian Gulf, for example, Mogadishu itself was founded by a colony of Arab immigrants from the al-Ahsa region, to the south of the al-Kuwait Sultanate, the nearby Bahrain islands. And this emigration was probably linked with the campaigns launched by the Abbasids against the heresy of the Qarmatis; and, without mentioning other facts, with the decline of Portuguese power in the Indian Ocean in the XVI century, the Imams of 'Oman asserted their sovereignty on the Somali shore. This domination of the Imams of 'Oman lasted for more than two centuries and stretched into the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the domination of the Sultanates of Zanzibar. And when the dynasty of Imams was divided into two branches of 'Oman and Zanzibar, Somalia was entrusted to the Arab Sultan of the African island.

Important cultural elements came to Somalia, Islam from Persia. The diffused oral traditions on the immigration of peoples from Shiraz have certain confirmation in the fact that one of the main monuments in medieval Mogadishu, Arba'-rukun Mosque, had an inscription by a certain Khorasan ibn Muhammed Ash-Shirazi, who had built it, while another inscription in 1217 commemorated a native from Naysabur in Khorasan who had established himself in Mogadishu.

With India, above all with Gujerat and the islands of Laccadive and the Maldives, Somalia's relationships were and have been limited to this very day, as testified by numerous Indian settlements which exist on the Somali coast. Beside aromatic products, one of the main exports of Somalia, that of black-headed sheep, headed particularly for the Indian markets. Medieval documents, namely ibn Battutah's travel reports and the notes made by the Arab geographer ad-Dimashqi, inform us of the roles played by the Laccadive Islands in the traffic between India and Somalia as a buffer landing-place and a market for the allotment of goods heading to various Indian ports. This hub of traffic used to be so intense

that at Venice, where commerce with India was escorted and jealously attended, through direct and indirect information sources, news about Somalia was diffused in the Laccadive market. And in the most important cartographic document of the most Serene Republic, Fra Mauro's map of 1467, Somalia with Mogadishu and Socotra are found united in one very vast island with Laccadive, and separated from the African continent by a strait which the map calls 'the concave of Diab' (Diab is the Arabic name for Laccadive). So the bond between Somalia and the Indian isles was considered more than between Somalia and the neighbouring regions of Africa!

Moreover, Portuguese navigators, upon their arrival in East of Africa, clearly described what they saw on their voyages. Pero Dias, Francisco de Tavora and Duarte Barbosa saw ships ploughing the sea from Gujerat to Mogadishu.

One last cultural wave once more reached Somalia from the Indian Ocean. Local historical traditions were already all agog with the arrival of faraway people who came and left by sea. This is a fact which has been confirmed by the islands close to the Kisimayu islands regarding the canoe supplied with two poles and of fishing with a remora. This was a typical method among naval populations of Indonesia and, therefore, not African, and suggests that they were from Madagascar, already settled by people from Malaysia who passed the Seychelles islands which formed the oceanic ante-mural of Somalia. Anucleus of daring navigators from Indonesia arrived at the Somali coast, where they brought and imposed some elements of their own material culture.

As we have seen, the relations that link Somali Islam are very diverse from the ones which do so with other east African countries, and reflect the situation in Somalia which exists and always has within an economical complex created by the hub of oceanic traffic.

By dint of such conditions, Islam in Somalia has had a greater deal of problems than Islam on the Abyssinian highland or amongst the Oromo. One of the main characteristics of Islam in Somalia has been the opposing tendency to the system of nobility, which is the basis of the

social Somali constitution. It is evident that Somalia is inhabited [1940] by clans, which are constituted according to classes of nobility. One belongs to a clan according to one's birth and a given person has rights which can be exercised according to his appurtenance to a given clan. This explains the importance of genealogy - each and every Somali has the aptitude of reciting his own by heart - which is supposed to be evidence of a common origin of that of the progenitor of the clan, and is also a qualification for juridical ability. From this comes also the privilege of the primogeniture, a very powerful one, which ensures a predominant position within each clan to a given lineage which originates from a common long-ago progenitor. The tutelage of the clan vis-à-vis a given person who belongs to the same clan is mainly manifested in three essential prerequisites in the life of a Somali. The first is defence of his own life and personal integrity, because homicide and personal injury have their own norms between one clan and the other, regarding cause, responsibility and who is the victim. Secondly there is marriage which still traces its origin to an old contract between the wife's clan and the one of the husband; while the real rights are the right to grazing in areas held by nomad shepherds or the right of ownership in agricultural areas, because the tribe not an individual has the right of pasture. Thirdly, the right of personal real property is subordinate to the eminent dominion of the tribe and hence an individual is the proprietor of a given land until that land is included within the border of his own tribe, and he himself is still a part of that tribe itself. We can see how this system is not very consistent with Islam, though the Muslim legal system is an integral part of this region. But Islam has never openly confronted this patrician Somali system in full, because they justify their system mainly, and at least temporarily, with the concept of 'Adah, even if it deals with systems expressively condemned by the Islamic orthodoxy like the inheritance of a sister-in-law by the brother of a deceased husband, and the exclusion of women from the inheritance of real properties. But Islam has acted rather radically in a sense that the diffusion of the Muslim culture has weakened, while accentuating or making some Somali legal systems disappear altogether.

To this norm of life the Muslim confraternities have strongly contributed in recent times: the Qadiriyyah and the Ahmadiyyah (the Sahibiyyah are a branch of the latter), with their own organisations scattered in all Somali regions and constituting organisations, creating fraternity bonds among tribes, and substituting the heads of tribes with a Khalifah of the fraternity, at least for those who adhere to this discipline. Here again direct confrontation is very rare, and the local susceptibilities of one single group are almost always efficiently safeguarded, because the constitution of the Somali tribes is still strong.

Nothing would demonstrate this better than the memory of the so-called movement of the Mullah, a movement which was stirred up at the dawn of this century by an Ogaden Somali, Muhammed ibn 'Abdallah Hassan, known to Anglo-Indians by the nickname "the Mad Mullah". This Mullah who came from the Salihyyah confraternity, tentatively to unify Somali Islam especially the anti-British deeds, assumed a contrary position to the bonds that tied the tribes for the sake of estranging himself from the patrician system and hence from the accepted inequality of rights among various ethnic organisms, creating a superior unity. We know that he had reached the point, very characteristically, of prohibiting that his followers be still called by the name of their own clans, and had constantly made them be named Darawish (the Dervish) alone, therefore, referring to them by religious bonds and not by the patrician ones. So he formed a military corps, composed of different Somali tribes to which he gave a special name, different from that of a tribal name, the Hagattu 'the Scratchers'.

But the necessity of an armed struggle against the British and the Abyssinians exasperated the tendency of his own personal psyche as a Somali; and bit by bit the Mullah, having not denied his principle clearly, was reduced to being the head of a large tribe, the Dervishes: a tribe, which, it is true, was composed of groups from various ethnic associations, which did not even act like a tribe, according to the federative bond, if not due to agnate relationships. This was the real political reason for the failure of the Mullah's tentative, and, therefore, a

dream of a Somali Mahdi became a mere head of a warrior tribe.

However, the course of events during Mullahism and the one I have mentioned regarding achievements of Muslim confraternity, are to be considered very seriously, if we put a European slant on it. After having shortened the distance, abolishing regional isolation, and creating new populated centres where, owing to reasons of industrial or agricultural works the natives of different ethnic groups could come, the disunion of the traditional Somali tribal structure, which is now [1940] the maximum social discipline of those groups would cease.

#### IV

So these are the different conditions in which Islam founded itself in three different areas of East Africa. From these conditions and situations treated by Islam, the political, religious and economic consequences did derive with paramount importance. What I have said here is worthy to be proved with an eye on the complexity and sensitivity of these problems, not only for the sake of an historical science, but for the functionality of a government which is supposed to be soundly founded on an effective knowledge of nations: the knowledge which Italy has generously given, and often great names in European Orientalism have been acquired, which makes Italy proud of her solid and well-based tradition. This tradition, which our youth are continuing and will continue, is a guarantee for the highest civilization which will be undertaken by future generations of scholars.



## 2. *ISLAM IN ETHIOPIA\**

Islam in Ethiopia, after contacts made during Prophet Muhammed's life from one shore to the other of the Red Sea. It starts its history with the Caliphs' conquests of the old empires, the Roman and the Persian, which necessarily brought the new Arab Empire to conduct its own policy vis-à-vis the sea-way from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indies. The first manifestation of this policy towards the Ethiopian shore of the Eritrean Sea, is the occupation of the Dahlak islands in the bay of Massaua and hence, the Gulf of Adulis, already the access point to the sea to the State of Axum for centuries.

The occupation of the Dahlak had already occurred during the reign of the first Omayyad Caliph. In fact, under the rule of Caliph Suleiman ibn 'Abd al-Malik (715-717)<sup>1</sup> the poet al-Ahwas was exiled to Dahlak because of his satirical poems against women of Medina and was not freed from exile except during the reign of Caliph Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik (720-724).<sup>2</sup> The long Muslim dominion of the Dahlak was later documented in about one hundred inscriptions, which were hitherto studied by Rene Basset<sup>3</sup> as well as by Malmusi<sup>4</sup> and Ettore Rossi.<sup>5</sup> The

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\* This unpublished specimen particularly insists on aspects of the cultural history of the Ethiopian Islam. While compiling same I made use of some points already prepared for the conference I held in Paris, Brussels and Warsaw.

<sup>1</sup> The 'Omayyad Caliphate's initiation towards East Africa had two different objectives: the one of the Red Sea, as has been mentioned in the text, for the surveillance of the sea route of India; and the one of the coast of Africa on the Indian Ocean for the protection of the old traffic route of the Monsoon Route to countries of Zingis. This second initiative in the Indian Ocean was almost contemporary to the other one in the Red Sea; and the 'Book of The Zingis' says that it was led, in its first phase, by Emir Musa al-Khat'ami during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (685-705 AD). Cf. my works Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti, Vol. Rome 1957, pp. 266-267.

<sup>2</sup> Kitab al-Agani, IV p. 48; and p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Rene Basset, *Les Inscriptions De L'île De Dahlak*, in *Journal Asiatique*, 1893, pp. 77-111.

<sup>4</sup> B. Malmusi, *Lapidi Della Necropoli Musulmana Di Dahlak*, Modena 1895.

<sup>5</sup> Ettore Rossi, *L'iscrizione Sepolcrale Di Zain Ul-Mulk Figlia Di Un Sultano Di Dahlak* (XII Century) In Treviso Museum, in *Rassegna Studi Etiopici*, III, 1943, pp. 46-49.

oldest of these inscriptions is dated 308 Hegira (920-921); and the most recent one is 647 Hegira (1249-1250).

Another minor group of Arabic inscriptions were discovered at Enderta, in northern Ethiopia, on the periphery of Tigray toward Mareb. These inscriptions on tombstones are dated from 391 Hegira (987) to 549 Hegira (1154) and concern the descending families from two Arab personalities, Hafs al-Yamami and 'Umar al-Yamami.<sup>6</sup> They must have been merchants who had settled there to collect and send Ethiopian merchandise to Dahlak and Massaua.

While this was afoot in the central sector of the Red Sea and Muslim expansion was still on the coast not offending the Christian State of Axum, some Arab historical documents and texts attest to the formation of a chain of small Muslim States in the southern sector as well as on the Gulf of Aden, which, having stretched themselves from the coast to the internal sector of the Ethiopian highland across the rivers Hawash and Gibe, they met in the southern part of the Axumite State. These south Ethiopian tiny states, ruled by monarchic and dynastic regimes which generally claimed to be of Arab origin, were populated by various ethnic inhabitants. One could say that in the farther southern areas and western ones the people were mainly composed of Cushitic stocks, particularly of the Semitic group.<sup>7</sup> In the far northern sector however, and owing to direct contact with the Christian State, at least one or more Ethiopian Semitic group of languages were spoken.<sup>8</sup> This fact, in the 'Chronological Index' which was published by myself,<sup>9</sup> is particularly important, because it confronts the hypothesis, historically very probable, that the immigration

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<sup>6</sup> C. Pansera, *Quattro Stele Muslumane Presso Uogher Hariba Nell'enderta* (End of IV century of Hegira), in *Studi Etiopici Raccolti Da C. Conti Rossini*, Rome 1945, pp. 3-6; M. Schneider, *Estles Funéraires Arabes De Quiha*, in *Annales D'ethiopie*, VII, 1947, pp. 107-117.

<sup>7</sup> Suffice it only to hint that the very name Shewa (Šewa) is etymologically similar to the Sidama (*Shewo* which is to this very date a name of one of the [Sidama] population of Gimira).

<sup>8</sup> I have tried to give some evidence in my premise: *Il Sultanato Della Scioa Nel Secolo XIII Secondo Un Nuovo Documento Storico*, in *Rassegna Studi Etiopici*, I, 1941, pp. 32-24. Cf. hereunder, on pp. 207-243.

<sup>9</sup> *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa* cited. Cf. hereunder, on pp. 208-209.

of Southern Arabs to Ethiopia did not only occur across the Gulf of Massaua and Adulis, but also through the southern sector of the bay of Tajura and through the one at Assab. And this was, no wonder, very natural, if we consider the geographical configuration of that area.<sup>10</sup> The Muslim expansion in southern Ethiopia during the deep Middle Ages is thus understood to be due to the probable renovation or to a possible continuation of the wave of human and traffic contacts that existed between Arabia and the opposite shore. So it is easy to identify the motives behind these relationships regarding traditional trade in slaves and ivory.

How did the conversion to Islam take place in southern Ethiopia? Little can be deduced from documents. Here as well one can consider an eventual similarity with what had happened in the north during conversions to Christianity. The Arab immigrant groups, a merchant and religiously Muslim community,<sup>11</sup> could have achieved success in their propagation towards local princes and hence, the population at large. These hypotheses have been backed up by traditions in a collection of works to be found in 'the Chronological Index' (regarding the end of XIII century AD), in which the first emigration from Arabia to Shewa, led by Wudd ibn Hisham al-Makhzumi took place during the Caliphate of 'Umar, therefore, in the VII century; in which the Makhzumites, the descendants of Wudd, had ascended the throne of the Sultanate of Shewa founded in 283 *Hegira* (896-897 AD). This chronicle as well does not seem to be dissimilar to the one ascertained here above regarding Islam in the Dahlak.

Propagating about Islam by the immigrants had certainly been

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. my essay *Punti Di Vista Sulla Storia Dell'etiopia*, in *Atti Del Convengno Internazionale Di Studi Etiopici*, Lincei Academy, Rome 1960, pp. 9-11.

<sup>11</sup> The diffusion of Islam along traffic routes, thanks also to the Arab merchants and their communities, matches well with the oldest origins of the Ethiopian Christianity, which had the Greco-Roman communities on the shore of the Red Sea as its point of departure, up to the time of St. Frumentius' intervention with his own apostles to convert the princes of Axum to the new religion. Still in the middle of the last century, the XIX, for a wonder, the Amharic word *Naggade* merchant had already passed to the current usage of Oromo dialects in the western parts with the meaning of *Muslim*.

welcomed in southern Ethiopia due to political and ethnic situations. The Christian State of northern Ethiopia was in a state of isolation from its two traditional niches: towards Arabia, where it had acted on concert of the Byzantine Empire and towards the Nile valley. Islam, upon the constitution of the Empire of the Caliphs, even if it had not been menacing the Axumite State from the Red Sea, was coercing it now to an isolation in Africa and hence, looking for another new niche of expansion towards the internal areas in the Ethiopian highland, namely, from the north to the south. So the necessities of defence forced the tiny South Ethiopian States to rely on the new religious movement coming to them from Arabia and which seemed to promise not only external help, but also a more internal cohesion and, therefore, a stronger ability to resist the Northern threat.

So we have seen how the dynasty which ruled Muslim Shewa from 283 to 684 *Hegira* (896-1285 AD), claimed to originate from the Makhzumite Meccan tribe, the one which had conquered Egypt: Khalid ibn Walid. And so the dynasty of Walasma', the Muslim rulers of Ifât (immediately to the east of Shewa) had a genealogy which started from 'Aq'il ibn Abi 'Talib, Caliph 'Ali's brother. These genealogical traditions, which link the African Sultans with persons belonging to the dawn of Islam, no matter what the historical value may be, are still useful signs of Ethiopian Islam's aspiration to unify itself with the great history of Muslim expansion.

While awaiting archaeological studies, which would really be important and rather necessary for knowledge of medieval Islam in the South,<sup>12</sup> we can still say that in these small Muslim monarchies there was a system in force which was not unlike that of the Ethiopian Christian State. The power exercised by the Sovereign was in fact limited, and often attacked by the chiefs of single districts or provinces (the Garads, as they

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<sup>12</sup> A limited group of Arabic inscriptions in Arussi region (in southern Ethiopia) was published by P. Ravaisse (*Notes Sur Quelques Steles Et Inscriptions Arabes Trouvees En Abyssinie, In La France Illustree*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1923; and re-read by E. Littmann (*Arabische Inschriften Aus Abessinien, In Zeitschrift Fur Semitistik*, III, 1925, pp. 236-246) with some complements I added in *Oriente Moderno*, VII. pp. 514-516.

were to be called in the Sultanate of Ifât), who aspired to maximum autonomy, if not independence.

While in the north there was only one State, whose Negusa Nagast, 'King of Kings' had control, legitimately recognised at least theoretically, by his Princes of various regions, the Muslims of the South were divided into various States, and their union was strengthened by their more or less vague acceptance, depending on times, of the hegemony of one of their Sultanates. So that we may continue to follow these historical developments, we say that we probably have the hegemony of the Sultanate of Damot; later affirmed by documents belonging to the Sultanate of Shewa which lasted to 684 *Hegira* (1285 AD);<sup>13</sup> hence, from the one of Adal up to 926 *Hegira* (1520 AD);<sup>14</sup> and in the end in Harar, where, though reduced to a minimum, the Muslim State continued up to 1887.<sup>15</sup>

This hegemony of rulers did not however impede, traditionally speaking, the popular movements led by religious heads or by the powerful Emirs themselves to force the Sultan, and the minor Princes, to wage wars against the Ethiopian Christian State. We know that just this occurred in 698 *Hegira* (1299 AD), thanks to Sheikh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah, who - as has been testified by al-Mufaddhal - raised and led the expedition against Christian Ethiopia, which was probably under the reign of Negus Wedem Ra'ad.<sup>16</sup> A little time later, Negus 'Amda Tsyon I in 1332 had to face the movement which was led by Qadi Salih.<sup>17</sup> At the close of the last period of splendour enjoyed by the Muslim State and thereafter, the Emirs Ahmed ibn Ibrahim and Nur ibn Mujahid after him, led the two main Muslim invasions of Ethiopia.

I have already mentioned how internal discord and hence, the

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. hereunder, on pp. 514-516.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. here in the following, on p. 135.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. hereunder, pp. 383-391.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. pp. 266-268.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. hereunder on pp. 120-122.

ambitions of each Emir was the permanent motive that brought about the weakness of the Ethiopian Muslim States. We however ought to note that the Walasma' dynasty, the Sultans of Ifât and then of Adal and in the end of Harar, had retained enough formal prestige that led the Emirs who had assumed and exercised effective power in the first half of the XVI century (Garad Abun, the above mentioned Ahmed ibn Ibrahim and Nur ibn Mujahid) to keep the dynasty of Sultans on the throne, almost as *Rois fainéants*. This deed has its own consequence even in documents, because, while the 'history of the Walasama'<sup>18</sup> gives pieces of information regarding dates of ascensions to the throne by these Walasama' Sultans and keeps silent about the analogous dates (the effective ones) of the Emirs, the 'History of Combatants in the Holy War'<sup>19</sup> does the contrary and ignores the legitimate Sultans. The issue, in addition to the fame acquired due to Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's achievements, had to be alive and thriving, at least amongst cultured circles of Ethiopian Islam, and we should consider the fact that more than one manuscript regarding Harar had been copied from marginal notes which just had the title *فصل في تسمية الامام إماما* (A Chapter on the denomination: the Imam of Imams [Ahmed ibn Ibrahim]): a title assumed by Ahmed effectively and which caused some difficulties.

Pertaining to this subject *Futuh al-Habashah* as well mentions various prophesies and previsions on the leadership duties of the Ethiopian Muslim to which Ahmed ibn Ibrahim had been prodigiously called. But Ulughani, the author of the Chronicle of Gujerat, who had summed up Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's undertakings based on *Futuh al-Habashah* which he had quoted, furnishes us with different marvels; and this proves that he based himself on the manuscripts of Futuh divergent from the ones that reached us yet nonetheless prodigies which justified the Imamate of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim that was predominant in various versions.

As a matter of fact, the miraculous manifestations mentioned in

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. soon hereunder on pp. 137-148.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. just hereunder, pp. 164-173.

*Futuh al-Habashah* which had justified the title of Imam on Ahmed ibn Ibrahim are:<sup>20</sup>

a) A swarm of bees surrounded Ahmed ibn Ibrahim which veiled his sight of the sun while he was making a visit to Sultan Abu-Bakr b. Muhammed b. Azhar ad-Din. The bees waited outside and upon his emergence, they veiled him once more and continued to do so on his return to his place.

b) The scholarly Shaykh Muhammed ibn Ahmed ad-Dahmani al-Magribi saw two learned devotees in his dream who revealed to him that Ahmed ibn Ibrahim must be named Imam, neither Sultan nor Emir. 'The Imam of the end of time' (Imam Akhir Az-Zaman),<sup>21</sup> rather.

c) A certain Sa'd al-'Arji saw the Prophet Muhammed in his dream with the Orthodox Caliphs (only 'Uthman is absent); and in front of Caliph 'Ali there is a person, whom later al-'Arji recognises as Ahmed ibn Ibrahim; and the Prophet Muhammed points to him saying: 'This is the one through whom Almighty God will better the land in Ethiopia' *هذا الرجل يصلح الله تعالى به بلاد الحبشة*<sup>22</sup>

In the Gujerat Chronicle, instead, we have:<sup>23</sup>

1. The episode of the bees has been omitted;
2. The scholarly Shaykh Shams ad-Din 'Ali as-Shathili al-

<sup>20</sup> *Histoire De La Conquete De L'abyssinie Par Chihab Addin Ahmed Ben 'Abd El Qader Surnomme 'Arab-Faqih*, edited by Rene Basset, Paris 1897 (text p.23; translation on pp. 27-30).

<sup>21</sup> It has not been proved, though, that Ahmed ibn Ibrahim was proclaimed Mahdi.

<sup>22</sup> The omission of 'Uthman from amongst the Orthodox Caliphs in this prophetic dream could seem to be as a hint of a belief nearer to *Shi'ism*. Though the most probably hated enemy by the Shi'ites is 'Umar, who appears here. Regarding these three prodigies and dreams *Futuh al-Habashah* tells us first about two predictions made by holy men: Shams ad-Din 'Ali b. 'Umar as-Shathili al-Yamani and Imam al-Mas'udi, who both prophesized that Ahmed ibn Ibrahim would have «dominated the whole Ethiopia by defaming the lords of Ethiopia and scattering the treasures and burning the churches» (*Histoire De La Conquete* cited on p. 4, text; transl. on p. 5), with variations - regarding Shams ad-Din in respect to the Gujerat Chronicle.

<sup>23</sup> An Arabic History of Gujarat, Zafar Ul-Walih Bin Muzaffar Wa Alihi by 'Abdallah Muhammed Ulughkhani, ed. by E. Denison Ross, London 1921, Vol. II, pp. 584-585.

Qurayshi al-Yamani predicts that 'He will be in possession of Ethiopia'.

3. The scholarly Shaykh ibn Zubayr prophesizes: 'Certainly there will appear a pious man from the country of Sa'd ad-Din and will be the lord of the entire land of Ethiopia'.

This chain of evidences and prodigies is meaningful. The commander Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, despite his victories, overcame the prestige of the old Walasma' dynasty with difficulty. And while 'Arab-Faqih, the author of *Futuh al-Habashah* who wrote during the events of the invasion and probably was a Harari,<sup>24</sup> cited dreams and prodigies to justify the Imamate of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim. The chronicler Ulughani instead wrote only the declarations made by the learned men; furthermore he, who used to write in India and hence, far away from the Ethiopian achievements, called Ahmed ibn Ibrahim with titles of Imam al-Muslimin and for a wonder Amir al-Mu'minin.

It is interesting to compare these signs of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's divine mission with Christian Ethiopia's traditions which explain why the Imam was sent by the Lord to test the Ethiopian Kingdom. Suffice to remember the legend of Negus Lebna Dengel's arrogance. He had the ground cudgelled so that it could give birth to any enemy to fight against (and the ground does make Ahmed ibn Ibrahim rise). Also, the legend of the soul of the Imam, who, after having died at seven years of age, presented itself to the Lord who returned it to its old body because, once restored to life Ahmed may have Ethiopia in his power for fifty years (later reduced due to the Virgin's intercession).<sup>25</sup> As we can see, the terrible events of the invasion caused the belief in the

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<sup>24</sup> He used to write his accomplishment (remained incomplete) in Yemen at Jizan; and his surname (in Harari language) was 'Arab Faqih' the Arab Jurist could indicate a Yemenite who came to Harar as much as he is, probably, a native of Harar and who was so learned of Arabic to merit that surname.

<sup>25</sup> Ignazio Guidi, *Legende Storiche Di Abissinia*, in *Rivista Studi Orientali*, I, 1907, pp. 17-20; C. Conti Rossini, *Aethiopica*, in *Rivista Studi Orientali*, IX, 1921-1923, pp. 367-368; and 462-463.



divine mission (of a victory or of a punishment) entrusted to Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim.

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The ascent to the throne of Christian Ethiopia by the Solomonic dynasty in 1270 had as a consequence a further move toward the south, and therefore, toward the interior of the highland, the political and the active service centre of the kingdom of the Negus. From Lasta, where the Zague dynasty had its capital, the Solomonites, having succeeded the Zagues, assumed power after departing the Amhara regions and, as we will see, their rulers are mentioned in the Arabic texts with the common name of: al-Amhari.<sup>26</sup> This push towards South was also later accentuated further due to the fact that the accession of the Solomonites was strongly backed by the monasteries and mainly by St. Stephanos on the Lake of Hayq. The monasteries pushed toward the Muslim and pagan countries of the south, where they, in some cases, were daring enough to be the vanguards with their lively Christian apostolic activities. These circumstances fatally brought about the battle between the Christian Ethiopian State and the Muslims of the South.

The very first action on the Muslim part, as far as we know, was the one of Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdullah in 1299 AD, and the Negus (probably Wedem Ra'ad) won it with his able policy of exploiting discord among the Muslims and in the end, by even offering a personal arrangement to Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdullah.<sup>27</sup>

But the war waged in 1332 by Sultan Sabr ad-Din of Ifât against 'Amda Tsyon I, was much more serious. Sabr ad-Din, having been defeated, had to surrender to the Negus and thus saved his own life, as has been reported by the chronicler of that king.<sup>28</sup> But some years later Qadi

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. hereunder, p. 268.

<sup>27</sup> See pp. 266-269.

<sup>28</sup> J. Perruchon, *Histoire Des Guerres De 'Amda Tsyon, Roi D'ethiopie*, in *Journal Asiatique*, 1889, pp. 298-300 (text); 343-345 (transl.).

Salih, led the Muslim league organised by himself once more against Amda Tsyon, who with a difficult campaign won a complete victory. After having annihilated the Muslim army and obliging, once more, Sabr ad-Din's family and their princes to submission, they also had the renegade Christians who had gone over to the enemy surrendered to them.<sup>29</sup>

The victory of 'Amda Tsyon over the Muslims has been celebrated in one of the most artistically alive works of Ethiopian literature and has an epic tone.

Here we have Sultan Sabr Ad-Din bragging:<sup>30</sup> 'I shall rule over Zion. I shall convert the churches into mosques for the Muslims. But regarding the Christian King I shall have him adopt my own law and shall put him in charge like one of my officials. Should he refuse my rule, I shall deliver him to herd shepherds, who are called Warjeh so that they may make him a camel-driver. As for Queen Jan Mogasa, the wife of that king, I shall have her grind grain. About his capital city, Mar'ade, I shall have it as my own capital and shall plant *Chat* there, because Muslims cherish this plant'.

Now we come to the dramatic scene between King 'Amda Tsyon and his army after their own victory over the Muslims led by Qadi Salah:<sup>31</sup> Hence, after the Negus has gathered his rank and file, so said he to them: 'Come on, talk and do not be afraid of me! out with what you want! Are we to leave our women and our children, our servants and our maids, who came here to help us: are we to leave them here and go away?'. Nobody uttered a word in answer to the Negus. And once more the Negus turned to them and said: 'In fact I will tell you: declare what you prefer and find suitable and what is better for you'. If you wish: 'Go ahead! Let us go back to our countries even today', yes! Let us go back

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<sup>29</sup> J. Perruchon, cit., Wor., pp. 432-433 (text); 479-480 (transl.).

<sup>30</sup> J. Perruchon, cit., Wor., pp. 281-282 (text); 363 (transl.). Cf. my *Storia Della Letteratura Etiopica*, III published in Milan, 1968, pp. 31-36.

<sup>31</sup> J. Perruchon, cit., Wor., pp. 415-417 (text). In this translation of mine I am following the text edited by Perruchon, but still considering some variations found in other manuscripts.

there. Be it at dawn or at dusk, during the day or at night, when you wish and when you have declared we will be going. Sometimes the Negus pays heed to what the officials advise; and in some other times the officials do according to the Negus' advice. Therefore, anything decided without counsel is folly. Come on, tell me!'If you declare so, we will go alone without our women, our children, our servants, our maids and our household goods. We will go and when you mount your horses and mules, I too will ride better than some of you; and if you swim your ways across rivers, I too will swim with the help of the Lord, because He, who was my help in the battle and saved me from the hands of the infidels, when you were far, can save me, wherever I trust in Him and He is my hope. Now say what you want to say'.

Then a man arose, an authoritative priest among the battlefield clergy, whose name was Hezba Egzi'abher, and addressed himself to the Negus: 'The Lord has really saved you from the hands of the infidels. Had it not been for the protection of the Lord, none of us would have been saved. Listen, Oh Negus! The Lord on that day did not send the Angels of His power, Michael and Gabriel, with their rank and file to help us and save us, but He Himself, the Son of God descended to save us with the might of His right from the hands of the infidels'...And the Negus listened to the word of that priest and said: 'It also seems to me, that if the entire Ethiopian army had come against those infidels, even if they had been armed neither with swords nor with spears nor with bows and nor with primitive arms, they could not have defeated them by force of spears, not even in six months. But the Lord, who is omnipotent and to Whom nothing is impossible, has cancelled them in one hour. He neither condemned us then for our sins, because He is merciful and loves the human being'.

And now one of the heads of the army turns to the Negus and says to him: 'As you have told us, the infidels did come and fought us with swords in these campaigns. And when we fought them and made them run away on their horse-backs that would have been a better deed, Are you trying to tell us that?'

Here gets up again another great official, the brother-in-law of the Negus and the brother of the Queen, and says: 'No, the Negus did not say that a philistine army came to us which the land could not contain, but that they made the mountains tremble and the big trees shake with their highly pitched cries. He instead said that he thought the Hadiya army had come as well as from Gojjam and Tigray against whom he had fought and won in the past'.

So the Negus said: 'What you have said is true because that is how it seemed to me.' And the Negus turned once more to the rank and file and said to them: 'Speak up and tell me! Are we going back by the route we came before or across a different route? Tell me, come on! Because deeds cannot be achieved with silence. Earlier you were afraid, and rightly so, when a winter cloud appeared above your heads, saturated with rain which hid the sky and the land; I say it was the great number of the infidels. But do not be afraid now! Because the Lord has fulfilled Himself with His mercy upon us and has saved us from the hands of enemies'.

And the soldiers answered him: 'By day and at night you really fought, oh Negus, and it is you who has saved us from the hands of the infidels. And now let us go back to our countries according to your advice!'

The Negus answered them: 'It is only animals which return to their pasture. I am instead telling you: Let us pass to the Adal land called Talag, kill the remnants of the infidels and then go back to our countries by another route'.

The soldiers answered: 'So be it as you say'.

This attitude expressed by the soldiers of the Negus, though after the great victory, showed an eagerness for returning home and typically parallels with the attitudes expressed by the Ethiopian Muslim army later, even after Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's victories.

'Oh Imam of the Muslims, you can see what has happened. Many of our soldiers have been killed; and we have few provisions left. Lead the army back to our country. We will reorganize and strengthen our

rank and file there; thus we will be able to undertake another expedition. But if you order us to stay, we will stay to fight together with you'.<sup>32</sup>

'Our fathers and our ancestors were not in the habit of settling in Abyssinia. They raided the bordering territories of the infidels, and so took livestock and other things as booty and then returned to their own Muslim countries. It is not our wont and custom to settle in another land'. They thus obliged the Imam to abandon his plan and they even intended to leave him when he thought to settle there, but God forbade it. Then Ahmed's relatives, the Emirs and his own advisers said to him: 'The soldiers are exhausted. They do not wish to settle here. Let us take them back to our countries; and when we set out for another expedition, and if you wish to stay, we will stay with you'. The Imam accepted their piece of advice.<sup>33</sup>

The Muslim defeat under 'Amda Tsyon's reign incited Christian Ethiopia to a series of offensive attacks on its southern enemy. Negus Dawit I defeated and killed the Sultan of Ifât Haqq ad-Din in 778 (1376-1377 AD) in battle; and his successor Yeshaq beats Sultan Sa'd ad-Din, Haqq ad-Din's successor, and pushed him back toward the sea as far as Zaila'.<sup>34</sup>

From the victories achieved by Negus Yeshaq we have a long epic song sung by his soldiers, which is meaningful in substance of a long list of conquered countries and of nations defeated,<sup>35</sup> while another song celebrates Yeshaq with boastful poetry which is one of the most typical manifestations of the Ethiopian art.<sup>36</sup> From the Muslim side, instead, Sultan Sa'd ad-Din ibn Ahmed, who fell in a battle against the Negus in 817 *Hegira* (1415 AD), became the traditional eponymous hero for the achievements of this epoch so much so that the corresponding littoral countries of Zaila' and Barbara took the name of 'Sa'd ad-Din Country'

<sup>32</sup> *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., pp. 64-65 (text); 131 (transl.).

<sup>33</sup> *Histoire*, cit., p. 79 (text); pp. 146-147 (transl.).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. hereunder, pp. 143-144.

<sup>35</sup> I. Guidi, *I Canti Ge'ez-Amariñña*, in *Rendiconti Accademia Lincei Sc. Mor.* 1889, pp. 55-58.

<sup>36</sup> Translated in my *Letteratura Etiopica*, III<sup>rd</sup> edition, Milan 1968, pp. 111-112.

(Barr Sa'd ad-Din) as far as the extension of the beginning of the Ethiopian highland.

In answer to the Christian Ethiopia's victories, there followed in the XV century, after various minor Muslim reprisals, the main undertaking of this epoch: the tentative invasion of Shewa, now Christian and the political centre of Ethiopia's Negus, by Sultan Badly ibn Sa'd ad-Din. The Muslim offensive had initial successes, but in the end Negus Zar'a Ya'qob in the battle of Egubba in north-eastern Shewa, on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1445, beat the Sultan, who died in combat, and chased the retreating Muslims as far as Hawash scattering the army and realizing a sizeable booty in the process. The Muslim State's proximity to the sea and its traffic meant it possessed most beautiful pieces of furniture that captured the amazement of the Negus's soldiers who now had them.

And so is written in a contemporary Ethiopian document:<sup>37</sup> "And his [Sultan Badlay] mule was like a big horse the likes of which had never been seen in the country of Ethiopia: it was three cubits high of stature and its reins were of gold, ornamented with bright precious stones reflecting as if they were a mirror which reflects a face, And his war steed was bigger than any large horse and it also had reins made of gold and silver. The swords were from Syria or Hormuz countries. His spear shone like a mirror. His raiment and the raiment of his military chiefs were adorned with gold and silver which glowed in each and all sides. His girded dagger was studded with gold and precious gems. His amulet was adorned with gold droplets; and the inscription on the amulet was made with golden colour. Even his umbrella was from the Syrian country, an absolutely marvellous make for who looks at it with its two painted winged snakes".

The battle of Egubba drew the curtain on wars waged in this epoch and the Muslim State did not raise dust till almost one century later. The decadence was precipitated by civil wars amongst various Emirs up to the transfer of the capital to Harar and the authority of the Sultan becoming only nominal.

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. my Essay *L'Etiopia Del Secolo Ed Arte*, V, 1933, p. 87 and p. 94 (transl.).

But after some ten years Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, an Emir who came to power after the demise of Garad Abun, killed, started in 927 *Hegira* (1530-1531 AD) the major undertaking for an invasion against Christian Ethiopia. The events of the war brought the swords of Islam from Harar as far as the most northern regions of the Ethiopian highland, and reduced the Kingdom of Lebna Dengel into a tiny, though fighting island, and this has been narrated as the main event of Ethiopian history whose memory is still thriving in tradition as well as in popular reminiscences be it in the Ethiopian Chronicle or in the one of the Muslim writer 'Arab-Faqih's book (uncompleted) *Futuh al-Habashah* 'the Conquests of Abyssinia'. The diffusion of the news of those victories in the Muslim world has been ascertained also by the fact that the résumé of the Conquests of Abyssinia is read in 'the Chronicle of Gujarat' by the Indian historian al-Ulughani.

The Ethiopian writer of 'the Abridged Chronicle' had also collected one which is probably a rather popular legend: a marriage proposal made by the Muslim Conqueror during a blazing war and a chain of victories. Indeed it is an episode of an epic poetry rather than a chronicle: 'The Muslim sent word to the Negus saying: 'Give me your daughter! She will be my wife; and thus we will be friends. And if you do not do so, there will be nobody to save you from me!'

And the Negus sent a message to him saying: 'I will not give her to you because you are an infidel; therefore, it is better for me to return to God rather falling in your hands, since His greatness is what it is, so is also wide His mercy; He gives strength to the weak and weakness to the strong',<sup>38</sup>

And when Garad 'Uthman was killed in a nocturnal ambush by a soldier of the Negus, the Christian writer's tone is not far from the usual humble registration of facts fit for the chroniclers: «And when God wills to have us learn about His power, He sent a poor one without a name who went to 'Uthman while he was sleeping with his woman and stabbed him

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<sup>38</sup> F. Beguinot, *La Cronaca Abbreviata di Abissinia*, Rome 1901, pp. 20-21; R. Basset, *Etudes Sur L'Histoire D'ethiopie*, in *Journal Asiatique*, 1881, p. 329 (text); p. 100 (transl.).

in the navel and lacerated him down as long as a palm, as told by one who had seen him. This occurred on the Covenant day of Our Lady Mary, the Mother of God. So you can see the power and the will of the Lord! As Anne the mother of Samuel said: 'He has weakened the arc of the strong and has girdled the weak with might' (I Sam. II, 4). Admire the might of God who chopped the prepuce of arrogance from the minds of Christians and Muslims alike. Had one great person from among the Christians found such a redeeming victory, he would have said: 'I have done it with my own strength and not with the might of God'; all Ethiopia could not have contained the bragging cries, especially if he was one of the princes of Tigray. But God, the best judge of secrets, had humiliated the strong by the hand of the weak, with him not expecting it; not by a spear or by a sword, but by a double-edged knife, a dagger. He that had sent us away from Dawaro as far as Massaua and to the Egyptian frontier has been humiliated by the might of the Lord».<sup>39</sup>

The tales of the wars and about the great Muslim invasions were not much different and continue by becoming typically refined with the episode of the liberation, as might be said today, of Muslim countries such as Gendabalo which were subjugated by the Christian followers of the Negus:<sup>40</sup> 'The inhabitants, the sheikhs, the *Fuqaha* the merchants and the country people came up to Ahmed and his soldiers, bestowed on them great honours and presented to them twenty ounces of gold as a contribution and homage'. At that particular moment Ahmed was poor: the soldiers and the emirs took one part of that amount and said to him: 'We are going to donate it to your wife Del Wambara'. Ahmed refused and answered: 'This gold is for the holy war.' The emirs insisted one second time and again he rejected their call. He adamantly refused to accept the gold for his wife and said: 'This is not licit. The gold has been donated to help Islam, I will not have any of it for my wife but will spend

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<sup>39</sup> F. Beguinot, cit., Wor., pp. 24-25; R. Basset, cit., Wor., p. 331 (text); pp. 101-102 (transl.).

<sup>40</sup> *Histoire de la Conquete d'Abyssinie*, cit., on p. 78 (text); p. 65 (transl.).



this gold on the holy war. He, thus, sent that gold to Shaykh Muhammed ash-Sha'tiri and bought one hundred swords which the Muslims bore witness during the battle of *Shimbira-Kuré*).

Regarding the tale about this very battle of *Shimbira-Kuré*, the Muslim Chronicle assumes an epic aspect.<sup>41</sup> The combat has started. Each rank and file of the infidels was five times as many of that of the Muslims. They were like a white spot on the skin of a black ox. So Imam Ahmed said to the Muslims: 'Recite the name of the Almighty! Do not look at Him, look to the ground! Beseech the divine help against them and keep steadfast! God is with us'. When the infidel came near to the Muslims, they had a cloud over their heads which protected them, while the Muslims were exposed to the scorching heat of the sun. So Imam Ahmed humiliated himself in front of God and implored Him saying: 'Oh living God, the Eternal, the Creator of skies and land, the Glorious and the Merciful, those are your enemies and the enemies of Your Messenger and the Prophets. They eat Your welfare and even adore another beside You. You are sheltering them and we Muslims are being exposed to the scorching heat of the sun!' As soon as the Imam ended his prayers the cloud was already passing from over the heads of the infidels to the heads of the Muslims and began sheltering them. The King of Abyssinia and his people started to watch them and looked at their own order in front of battle: the rank and file were now closed, the spear pointed for combat was ready. But panic and terror entered the heart of the enemies. So the savant Abu Arshunah uttered some words while he was near the banner of the Imam. He urged the Muslims to fight and in answer to his words their hearts throbbed and their eyes dampened. Said he: 'Oh Muslim soldiers, Paradise sparkles and Hell is closed. The Angels are watching over us. The Houris with black eyes are embellished: welcome the eternal life'. And so saying he recited: 'God has bought lives and goods from the believers so to give them Paradise. Combat they shall in the path of God: kill they shall and killed they will be according to one virtue promised by

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<sup>41</sup> *Histoire de la Conquete d'Abyssinie*, cit., pp. 59-60 (text); pp. 122-123 (transl.).

God which is certain in the Pentateuch, in the Bible and in the Koran. Who is more faithful than God in His promise? So enjoy the contract you have concluded with Him: it is an immense felicity indeed' (Koran, IX, 142). Then the Muslim said to the Imam: 'Let us charge'. But the Imam vetoed it: 'Be steadfast in your own positions' - said he - 'do not offer them a combat which they are not offering. Hold your spears, cover yourselves with your shields and do not move without pronouncing the name of God'. So the believers came out from their respective positions to fight the enemy, and Imam Ahmed kept on repeating: 'Men of Islam, steadfastness is strength and the inaction is weakness: May it be known that the patient ones are those who win. Inaction and cowardice are the two causes of despair. Whoever is patient, God will help him against his enemies because God is with him. Who stands the tip of enemy swords amongst us will triumph tomorrow and will not suffer tiredness anymore; and when he meets his God, God will give him a glorious rank and will compensate him for his endeavours. God loves the patient'.

When the formation came within reach, the Muslims saw a numerous army with shining swords. Then the enemy of God, Negus Wanag Sagged, the Abyssinian dog, shouted at his soldiers: 'Charge!'. They attacked the Muslim right wing as if they were one single person and these withstood the attack. Then the right wing of the polytheists attacked the Muslim left wing where the Somali tribes were stationed. Then the Tigre contingents, and the coward patricians precipitated into the centre of the Muslim formation where the Imam himself was stationed. He and his companions welcomed them with Islamic heart and Muslim alacrity. The two armies became muddled, swords were unsheathed, spears began to hurl, flags and banners started to agitate in the wind; tools struck one another; horses neighed; dust arose profusely; sweat oozed and wet the warriors' chests because of the weight of the arms; despite this all there was no wailing, only roars; and for the war-horses only the reins remained due to sword strokes on the shields and on the helms of the two enemy formations. The town-cryer made heard, however, this proclamation: 'Oh nation of Muhammed, patience! You will have a great deal. The Houris

with black eyes are under the shade of swords and under the tips of spears».

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But meanwhile, the world system was being radically changed and the great navigation at the end of the XV century with the discovery of the sea-way to the Indies around the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco da Gama influenced the position of Ethiopia as well in international politics. In fact, the Red Sea was ploughed by ships which transported goods from Egypt and Alexandria to the Indies for centuries. Merchandise reached there by land caravans and by waterways to the Nile or the Delta canals; this hub of traffic marketed the merchandise in the Mediterranean countries, mainly by the Venetians. Venice considered Egyptian independence and her friendship with the ruling Egyptians as a political dogma. But now this traffic was being moved along the oceanic ways and this was a serious blow, and irreparable at that, to the Venetian economy, and later the conquest of Egypt in 1517 by the Sultan of Turkey, Selim I, severed any remaining hopes.

However, if concerning Venice the consignments are thus to be considered unfortunately closed or limited to any possibility, which is very unlikely, for a collaboration between Venice and Turkey, there still remained for Portuguese oceanic navigation the risk of operating or managing that the growing power of the Ottoman Sultan would not eventually try to hamper or damage the new traffic route. This meant the necessity of the Portuguese moving their naval fleet in the Red Sea in 1513 and following the vicissitudes there on both shores. The crusade of the fleet commanded by Alfonso de Albuquerque, who undertook the occupation of Qamaran island on the Arabian coast and the cruise of Diego Lopez se Sequeira's team in 1520 which reached Massaua initiated the direct relationship between Portugal and Christian Ethiopia. Ethiopia became a staunch ally and the backbone for the surveillance of the Red Sea. That is why the successes of the Muslim invasions of Ethiopia, under the command of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, became clear, but had they

been so, they would have allowed Muslim domination on both shores of the Red Sea, thus giving the advantage to Islam of a favourable situation which after centuries and centuries was never verified. Therefore, it appeared convenient to Lisbon to have direct intervention in Ethiopia on the Negus' side, who used to appeal to it persistently, for the sake of reinforcing the resistance of the African Christian State.

A Portuguese contingent, under the command of Stefano da Gama, the son of Vasco, landed a hand-picked team of Portuguese riflemen and eight artillery pieces at Massaua on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1541. This body was led by Christopher da Gama, Stefano's brother. The heroic contribution of the Portuguese on the side of the Ethiopian army had validly decided the destiny of the war. However, Christopher da Gama, wounded, was taken prisoner by Imam Ahmed who had him horribly tortured and then decapitated while still delirious, because of the lofty dignity with which the noble son of Vasco da Gama stood the horrendous agony he was a real martyr. And in the following battle, on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1543 a Portuguese soldier killed Imam Ahmed with a gun. The death of the supreme head of the Muslim army put an end to the invasion; so Negus Glawdewos, having succeeded Lebna Dengel recovered a good part of the territory.

The endeavour of Emir 'Abbas to launch an attack against the Negus ended also with a serious defeat in 1545 within the region of Dawaro;<sup>42</sup> and after that in 1558 a body of Turkish soldiers under the command of Pasha Uzdamer, making its way towards Tigray was also beaten and scattered.

Only in 1559, and a good sixteen years after Imam Ahmed's death did a violent war make its comeback when the Muslims had Emir Nur ibn Mujahid as their leader, 'the Second Conqueror' (*Sahib al-Fat'h ath-Thani*) of the Chroniclers. Nur assembled a strong army and advanced towards Ethiopian territory. And on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1559 the Ethiopian army

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<sup>42</sup> W. El. Conzelman, *Chronique De Glawdewos (Claudius), Roi D'Ethiopie*, Paris 1895, pp. 28-29 (text); pp. 138-139 (transl.).

led by Negus Glawdewos joined battle against the Muslim army; and Negus Glawdewos was defeated and killed. Emir Nur's victory did not last though, because, while the situation was so, there arose a much more serious danger which menaced the two rival States together, the Christian Ethiopia as much as the Muslim one. The Oromo warrior tribes stationed in a region toward the Indian Ocean, a region called southern Somalia today, were now sandwiched between the Somalis who were advancing down from the north to reach the great rivers Webi and Juba, and the Bantu Negroes continuing their long resistance to the Oromo were coming up from the south. The Oromo tribes, therefore, started to look for an escape route to the north and hence, towards the Ethiopian highland. Their invasion of Ethiopia was facilitated by the state of prostration and exhaustion suffered by the Ethiopian Christians and the Muslims as well after the bitter wartime vicissitudes just described.

And so Emir Nur ibn Mujahid died in 975 *Hegira* (1567-1568 AD), while this Muslim country was devastated by the Oromo and ruined altogether by a very terrible famine.<sup>43</sup> But his victory against Negus Glawdewos made him the eponymous hero of Muslim achievements; his Qubbah in the city of Harar is the destination of pilgrims, while numerous songs celebrate him (in the Harari language). It is typical that Nur acquired this pre-eminent status in the local Muslim tradition which makes him more important than Imam Ahmed whose victories took the Muslims far away and who, to add insult to injury, fell in battle.<sup>44</sup>

On the Christian side, the memory of this tormented epoch has remained linked with the personality of Imam Ahmed himself who was given the nickname of Gagn 'the Left-handed' in Ethiopian Chronicles as much as in the popular tradition, while in fact the Imam was fairly ambidextrous, as has been attested in documents.

The glorious end of Glawdewos was sung, for instance in a

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<sup>43</sup> Cf., hereunder, pp. 157-158.

<sup>44</sup> Could the opposition to this minor veneration of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim in the Muslim tradition have influenced this fact? Nur ibn Mujahid, however, never wished any title except that of Emir; and this also could be meaningful because of the reserved attitude of strict Muslims.

quasi-poem which took the acrostic of the Psalm of David as a model (the 118 of the Psalm-book), from which I translate two corresponding strophes of (Hebraic) letters verbatim *Alef*, *Dalet*, *Samket*, 'Ayn and *Qof*.<sup>45</sup>

«*Alef*, I would have rather wished to be killed by somebody in place of Glawdewos my lord and would have wished to have fallen out of life!

Woe to us! Woe to us! The morning star has met its dusk and the night star is already spent. The day has, thus, become an indiscernible night; and the uncommon nights have been thrust and the animals and man have been tightly entangled.

There is no more a being who pushes away the enemy: here is the prince of our might interred in the depth of land; and our intrepid rank and file has abandoned the camps and vanished.

*Dalet*, The daughter of Ethiopia now shrouds herself with a tunic of leather and pelt; and like a leaf, a hair-cloth she dons.

On her neck, instead-of a golden necklace, a yoke she bears; and, instead of a hall full of joy and drinks, she makes the fortress of lamentations her own abode.

She strews ash on her head instead of a mild perfume, rose water.

Was it not him, Glawdewos, who had anointed her with perfumed oil? And now he hath suffered the disparity like a foreigner and an exile!

Oh death, you cruel judge, you are in possession of an innocent one as if he were your debtor and you demand his delivery without you having given anything to him. You are neither ashamed of the mother's agony nor are you worried about the affectionate son.

Oh you looter death, who does not leave alone the sorrowful stone piled on the stone of the cornerstones of their lives!...

*Samket*, Where have you gone, abandoning your throne, you Glawdewos, King of Zion? All are looking for you with zeal without

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<sup>45</sup> W. El. Conzelman, cit., Wor.; pp. 109-110, III, and 115-116 (text); pp. 182-183 and 185 (transl.).

being able to find you. Have you risen, flying like a falcon through the vastness of air or sunk like fish in the depth of the sea?

'Ayn, The wine which was ready for our joy has been poured out from the jar; and our souls have been chained by sorrow and upset. Our life is as light as a dry leaf at the mercy of the north wind.

*Qof*, Woe to me! I have made a lyric out of my agony and the pain has become my harp».

The demise of two protagonists in the last battle means also a radical change in the situation in Ethiopia.

The Oromo seized a great part of the country, especially in the South and the West and settled permanently while still threatening both old rivals, Christians and Muslims, with their raids and plundering. The Christian Empire of the Negus and the Emirate of Harar being so separated, even territorially, commenced the mission of converting the Oromo tribes settled on the highland each to its own religion. The Emirate of Harar was by now the main Islamic centre in Ethiopia.

There was in Harar a little local literature, in the Harari language but in Arabic characters, with a didactic aim regarding dogmas and Islamic jurisprudence. The (Book of Duties) '*Kitab al-Fara'idh*' is a part of this literature, the works of Faqih 'Tayyib al-Wanaghi, which I paraphrased and published some years or so ago.<sup>46</sup> *Kitab al-Fara'idh* is written in an obsolete language compared to modern Harari and is assumed to be from the second half of the XVI century or before the first half of XVII AD. It sums up the truthfulness of the faith as well as the main precepts of Islamic jurisprudence. And by making use of popular literature forms, it made the latter ones thrive and jive in Oromo and Somali folklore. Here are some of these popularised passages:<sup>47</sup>

«A believer enters three abodes: at best, he enters the abode of prayers to God; at worst, he enters the abode of patience; if he dies, he enters eight Paradises. A sinner enters three abodes: at best, he enters the

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<sup>46</sup> *Studi Etiopici, I. La Lingua E La Storia Di Harar*, Rome 1936, pp. 282-343.

<sup>47</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 290 (text); p. 328 (transl.).

abode of haughtiness; at worst, he enters the abode of theft; if he dies he enters seven Hells.

The three love three things: the angels love the silent; the children of Adam love the one who gives; the Creator loves he who asks.

Three are the characteristics of creatures: hating the one who asks; giving little when asked; asking big compensations for oneself.

Three are the characteristics of the Creator: loving who asks; giving much when He gives; not asking compensation for what He gives...

«Convince Me with three things! Fear Me for three things, Venerate Me for three things!» has said the Lord. «Convince Me with three things» has said God. (With prayers, with fasting and your alms-giving, convince Me!). (Fear Me for three things» has said God, «I have 'Azra'il (the Angel of death), who never comes back empty-handed from whence I send him; because of that 'Azra'il be afraid of Me!». «I have the fire (of Hell) which never gets extinguished when kindled; because of that fire be afraid of ME!». «When I am tacit, in My taciturnity there is anger, and because of that taciturnity be afraid of Me!» has said God. «For three things venerate Me!» has said God. «You who cannot even keep a shack without its central pole! I keep the seven skies upright without a pole! And you, because of this power, venerate Me» has said God. You who are not able to stretch a single pelt without stakes!; I keep the seven lands stretched without stakes! and you because of this power venerate Me!» has said God. «You who, if one single guest comes to you, you start to counsel with each other, husband and wife, and wonder: What shall we do? But I, without counselling anyone, feed each creature. So you, because of this power, venerate Me!» has said God.<sup>48</sup>

But, besides these popular modules, *Kitab al-Fara'idh* deals with much more superior theological problems. So here the oneness and singleness of God comes to be explained:

«If you ask: What does *One* mean?: It means Him whose essence is only one; Who is so and about Whom one cannot say to have perceived

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<sup>48</sup> Cit., Wor., p. 291 (text); p. 329 (transl.).



even once; Who is so and about whom one cannot say to have had His ways only in one thing; Who is so and about Whom one cannot say to be only on land or in the sky or on the Throne or in the Chair, up or down, standing or seated, speaking or silent, Who is so and about Whom one cannot say is in the world or among the created, in the union and in separation, far or near.

If you ask: What does *Single* mean? It means Him Who has life which is unrivalled with any other life; Who has a knowledge unrivalled to any knowledge; Who has a word *Kalam* unrivalled with any word; Who has a will unrivalled to any will; Who has a deed unrivalled to any deed; Who has power unrivalled to any power; Who has hearing unrivalled to any hearing; Who has sight unrivalled to any sight; Who has recitation unrivalled to any recitation; the One who is on land, in the sky, on the Throne and in the Chair, at the same time; Who has a knowledge through which He knows perfectly; Who has the power through which He acts perfectly; Who has greatness which is not attained through brains or thoughts».

To this literature in old Harari there is also another which is alike, *Qasida of the Four Caliphs*, which is a long poem of about five thousand verses in groups of four mono-rhythmic verses, each of which celebrates one of the four orthodox Caliphs: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali; and maybe it should not be excluded that this poetry could have had an apologetic intention of a Sunni doctrine compared to the tendency and propagation of the Shi'ite doctrine which contacts with the Zaydis of Yemen and Persians could have favoured.<sup>49</sup>

Side by side with the Harari literature there also developed a minor literature in Arabic. Suffice it hers to consider the interesting and popular 'historical novel': *Futuhat Madinat al-Awliya* 'Victories of the City of the Holy Men' in the wars which the Muslim State of Harar waged against the Christian enemies starting from its foundation (legendarily dated here as from 612 *Hegira* - 1216 AD), which had been seconded by

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. my *Storia della Letteratura Etiopica*, III ed., cit., p. 132.

two Portuguese tribes and (strangely enough) by the Italians. So are also various works and tracts, a great deal of which are dated as from the XVII and XVIII centuries AD, which contain historical notes on the events in Harar and the magic texts in the form of a tract written by a Harari *Faqih*, Hamud b. Sadiq, of the *Hanafi* rite, against those who believe in the orthodoxy of only one out of the four schools of Muslim jurisprudence. This last tract, dated 1178 *Hegira* (1765 AD), regards the disputes of coexistence between the followers of the Shafi'ite rite, now preponderant, and the Hanafi rite which was predominant in Harar.<sup>50</sup>

This cultural activity and propagation, which lasted, as we have seen now, for all long periods in which the Emirate of Harar remained isolated and surrounded by the peoples of Oromo and Somali, only then came to be reinforced and augmented during the middle of the XIX century by dint of diffusion of Muslim confraternities. In Harar itself and within the territory of the Emirate, the *Qadiriyyah* confraternity mainly prevailed, which even had enlarged some of its establishments among the West Ethiopian Oromo. In the south-west, instead, the *Ahmadiyyah* were predominant. They are the followers of the mystic Yemenite Ahmed ibn Idris' and have their main centre in a *zawiya* built around the very venerated *qubba*, of the holy man Sheikh Nur Hussein. We will return to this issue elsewhere.<sup>51</sup> Once more in the west, among the Oromo ethnic tribes, there were some Algerian confraternity establishments of *Tijraniyya*; as well as the Sudanese *Sammaniyya* and the other Sudanese *Mirghaniyya*.<sup>52</sup>

But the Emirate of Harar, which remained as the main centre of Islam on the African shore, fell in 1887 when Negus Menelik beat Emir 'Abdullahi in the battle of Challanqo and solemnly entered Harar.<sup>53</sup> After an unsuccessful proposal to give power to a notable dynasty of Emirs as

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<sup>50</sup> Cf., Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *secondo elenco dei manoscritti arabi islamici della biblioteca Vaticana*, the Vatican City 1965 (studi e testi, Vol., 242), pp. 154-156.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. my opera works, cit., *Somalia. Raccolta di scritti editi ed. inediti*, Vol. II. II, Rome 1956, pp. 134-140; and hereunder, pp. 335-344.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. my *Etiopia Occidentale*, Vol., II, Rome 1933, pp. 192-193.

<sup>53</sup> See hereafter pp. 385-386.

the vassal of the Negus, Harar became annexed to Shewa and hence, to the Ethiopian Empire.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. pp. 390-391.



### 3. *ARAB DOCUMENTS REGARDING THE HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA*<sup>+</sup>

Summary:

1. Preface
2. The history of the Walasma' dynasty, the rulers of Ifât and Adal.
3. The last rulers of the Walasma' dynasty.
4. The '(History of the Kings' from 926 to 991 *Hegira*.
5. The different forms of the 'History of Kings'.
6. Fragments from a certain Chronicle of Aussa:
  - a. From the sacking of Zaila', to the events of 999 *Hegira*;
  - b. From 1008 *Hegira* to the raid of 'Umar-Din ibn Adam on Oromo Baso;
  - c. The volcanic phenomena in Aussa,
7. The wall of Zaila' and the Abyssinian incursions in Harar
8. The visit of two Sherifs to Harar in 1030 *Hegira*.
9. The Nomination of a Qadi in Harar.
10. A Oromo raid on Harar in 1073 *Hegira*.

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<sup>+</sup> [*Memorie Della Reale Accademia Nazionale Dei Lincei*, group VI, Vol. 1931, pp. 39-96]

## § 1 Preface

In the south of the Abyssinian kingdom some Muslim states were formed during the deep Middle Ages, and pushed their way from the Gulf of 'Aden as far as the valley of the Hawash river and probably farther. The most important of these States for a certain period was the Kingdom of Ifât, on the edge of the Shewan highland to the north-east of Ankobar, and later on the Kingdom of Adal with its capital at Dakar, situated, so it seems, in the east of Harar in the neighbourhood of current Fiyambiro.<sup>1</sup> The kings of the Solomonic dynasty, who ascended the Abyssinian throne in 1270 AD soon were worried about the danger these southern Muslim states would present to Christian Abyssinia. Thus, started a series of wars between Abyssinia and the Muslims, wars which, with brief periods of interruptions, one could say, lasted for two and a half centuries: starting from an expedition sent against Sabr ad-Din, king of Ifât<sup>2</sup> which was led by Negus 'Amda Tsyon I in the second period of his reign (1314-44) up to the expedition sent by the Sultan of Adal, Muhammed ibn Nasir, against Negus Malak Saggad in 1577. And then the Oromo, with their great invasion, separated the two rival states by forcing both sides to defend themselves against that new common danger.

While the Ethiopian Royal Chronicles have given us these pieces of information regarding these wars from the Christian point of view, there is a dearth of Muslim historical documents. In addition to translations published by Paulitschke about two documents (see further), we do not actually have main reports of Ethiopian Muslim history, except a booklet written by al-Maqrizi in the year 839 *Hegira* (1435-1436 AD); the history of the conquest of Abyssinia by 'Arab-Faqih, uncompleted,

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<sup>1</sup> According to a marginal note written in a manuscript regarding the *Storia della Conquista di Abissinia* copied in Harar.

<sup>2</sup> Regarding the expedition of 'Amda Tsyon I against Haqq ad-Din refer hereunder on p. 149.

which narrates only the first part of the great Muslim invasion of Abyssinia in the XVI century. In the end we notice the interesting hint about this great invasion in the (Arabic) Chronicle of Gujarat, the famous Indian region.

I was able to collect some historical documents during my stay in Harar which I am publishing here with some references to information from other sources. These documents have been copied by me in Harar from sewn squared pages at the beginning and end of books on Muslim Law or comments on the Koran. In these squared pages, besides succinct narration and chronicle compilations, there often follow single notes of events added by contemporary commentators, most probably to up-date the above-copied stories. These collections are of paramount interest for the knowledge of the history of Ethiopian Islam. But, unfortunately, they are not very accessible for local reasons and the possessors of these manuscripts are not always willing to have their custody of these Muslim chroniclers revealed to others.

Of nine documents published here in their Arabic texts and the Italian translation, seven are completely new: two, the first and a part of the fourth of my own series, instead, were already copied by Paulitschke in Harar but he only published the German translation owed to Wahrmond, a translation which was not always correct particularly due to the prevailing condition for Ethiopian studies at that time. I supply the text here regarding these two documents which is the facsimile of the manuscript I copied in Harar in 1926, and a fresh Italian translation. I have accompanied the translation of these documents with a good number of notes, which seemed necessary to me especially for re-grouping the various circumstances of historical stories with what is known from the Ethiopian Chronicles or from al-Maqrizi and from 'Arab-Faqih pertaining to the relationships between Christian Abyssinia and the Muslim States of Ethiopia. In the publication of these texts I am bent on following the chronological order.

## § 2 The History of The Walasma' Dynasty

### The Rulers of Ifât and Adal

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذه حكاية في قصة تاريخ عمر ولسمع وابنائهم ومدة ولايته أول ابتدائه عمر بن دنياحوز بن احمد بن محمد بن حامد بن محمد بن الشيخ يوسف يعنى بركتله بن محمد بن عبد الله بن سعيد بن علي بن محمد بن اسمعيل بن يحيى القريشي الهاشمي من ذرية الحسن بن علي بن ابي طالب كرم الله وجهه وجد هرسول الله صلعم محمد بن عبد الله بن عبد المطلب واجداده الى ادم خمسون جدا وبعده نتكلم الان في مدة عمر ولسمع وفي مدة ولايته ومن تولى بعده من اولاده وكان عمره في الدنيا مائة وعشرين سنة ومن قبل ولايته كان عمره اربعين سنة وتولى ثمانين سنة وجملة هذا الزمان مائة وعشرين سنة واما عمر ولسمع فكان له من الاولاد ثلثمائة ذكور وثلثمائة وستين بنات وكان اختار منهم اربعين واختار من الاربعين اربعة وحكايته طويلة ولكننا اختصرناها وبعده تولى بزويو عشر سنين ثم تولى بعده اخوه حق الدين عمر سبع سنين ثم تولى بعده حسين خمس سنين ثم تولى بعده نصر الدين سبع سنين ثم تولى بعده منصور بن بزويو خمس سنين ثم تولى بعده جمال الدين بن بزويو سبع سنين وكان عالما ورعا صالحا وكان له خادم من الجن كل يوم يخدمونه بواحد كان يجيب له ورقة من اباوين في ساعة واحدة ويأتي له من الماء من اواش يفعلون له كل يوم كذلك ثم تولى بعده أبت سنيتين ثم تولى بعده زبير سنيتين ثم تولى بعده مات ليل اخت زبير سنيتين ثم تولى بعدها صبر الدين خمس سنين ثم تولى بعده قاط علي اربعين سنة ثم تولى بعده ابنه حرب ارعد سنيتين ثم تولى بعده ابنه حق الدين وهو الذي اسس طريق الجهاد في سبيل الله عشر سنين تولى سنة 778 ثمان وسبعين وسبعمائة من الهجرة النبوية وقتل شهيدا سنة 788 ثمان وثمانين وسبعمائة ثم تولى بعده السلطان سعد الدين بن احمد في شهر صفر سنة ثمان وثمانين وسبعمائة من الهجرة وقتل شهيدا في اليوم السادس في شهر ذي الحجة سنة سبعة عشر وثمان مائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته ثلاثين سنة وشهرين الا خمس ايام ثم تولى بعده ولده صبر الدين سنة ثمانية عشر وثمان مائة من الهجرة وكان بين ولايته وولاية ابيه سنة فترة وهم كانوا في بلاد العرب ثم نزلوا من بندر السيارة ثم تولى على المسلمين بعد الفترة وتوفي في خمسة وعشرين وثمان مائه من الهجرة ومدة ولايته تسع سنين ثم تولى اخوه منصور بن سعد الدين عشر سنين وتسعة اشهر ومن الناس من قال سبع سنين والله اعلم ثم تولى اخوه مولانا السلطان جمال الدين بن سعد الدين سنة ثمان وعشرين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته سبع سنين وقتل شهيدا يوم اربعة عشر من شهر جماد الاول سنة ستة وثلاثين



وثمانمائة ثم تولى بعده مولانا السلطان بدلاي بن سعد الدين يوم الرابع من شهر جماد الاول سنة ستة وثلاثين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته ثلاثة عشر سنة الا اربعة وعشرين يوما وقتل شهيدا في اخر العصر يوم السادس العشرين من شهر رمضان وكان الزحل في النثرة سنة تسعة واربعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة وفيه من الناس من قال مدة ولايته اربعة عشر سنة الا ثلاثة اشهر والله اعلم ثم تولى بعده ابنه السلطان محمد بن بدلاي يوم السبت ستة وعشرين خلون من شهر رمضان سنة تسع واربعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته ستة وعشرين سنة وتوفي ليلة الاربعاء ثالث من شهر رجب ستة وسبعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ثم تولى بعده ولده السلطان ابراهيم بن محمد ليلة الاربعاء قبل دفن ابيه سنة وسبعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته سنة وخمس اشهر وتوفي يوم الاثنين في اليوم الثاني من شهر ذي الحجة سنة ستة وسبعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ثم تولى بعده اخوه السلطان شمس الدين بن محمد يوم الاثنين الثاني من شهر ذي الحجة سنة ستة وسبعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته خمسة عشر سنة واربع اشهر وقتل السلطان شمس الدين يوم الخميس من شهر جماد الاول سنة اثنين وتسعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ثم تولى بعده ابراهيم بن قاط نصر الدين سنة اثنين وتسعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته عشر اشهر وقتل يوم العشرين من شهر ربيع الاول سنة ثلاثة وتسعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ثم تولى بعده السلطان محمد بن اظهر الدين بن علي بن ابي بكر بن سعد الدين سنة ثلاثة وتسعين وثمانمائة من الهجرة ومدة ولايته احدى وثلاثين سنة ومن الناس من قال انه تولى اثني وثلاثين سنة وكان اكثر ممن تولى من اهل ولسمع وبعده تولى السلطان علي بن محمد بن اظهر الدين والله اعلم ومدة ولايته سنتين وبعده تولى السلطان فخر الدين سنة او نصف سنة وبعد ذلك تولى مولانا السلطان ابو بكر بن مولانا محمد بن اظهر الدين والله اعلم وهو الذي نقل الناس يعني العسكر من بلد ذكر الى هرر للاقامة فيها في شهر شعبان سنة ستة وعشرين وتسعمائة وباقي لوفاء الف اربع وسبعين سنة من الهجرة النبوية عليه افضل الصلوة وازكى السلام.

In the name of God, the compassionate and the Merciful. This is a tale of a narration of the history of 'Umer Walasma<sup>3</sup> and his children and

<sup>3</sup> 'Walasma' is the name of an old dynasty which soon became a title used in the Ethiopian Muslim countries. It has already been recorded in the (Ethiopian) Chronicles of Negus Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1478) that the head of Ifât has the title of Walasma' (see *Les Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et Ba'eda Maryam Rois D'ethiopie*, edited by Perruchon, p. 112 ወለሰማ (is certainly an error for ወለስማ); furthermore Ludolf, writing in the beginning of XVII century, recorded that the title of the governor of Ifât was *ma*. (Ludolf, *Historia Aethiopiae*, Vol. II, chap. XVII). Even today the chief of the Muslim population still inhabiting Ifât has the title of *Walasma'*. Cf., pp. 148-149.

of the period of his reign. His first origin is: 'Umar the son of Dunyahwz<sup>4</sup> the son of Ahmed, the son of Muhammed, the son of Hamid, the son of Mahmud, the son of Shaykh Yusuf and that is Barkhadlah<sup>5</sup> the son of Muhammed, the son of 'Abdallah, the son of Sa'id, the son of 'Ali, the son of Muhammed, the son of Isma'il<sup>6</sup> the son of Yahya, the Qureyshite, the Hashimite the descendant of al-Hasan the son of 'Ali the son of Abu 'Talib - may God honour his face - whose grandfather was the Messenger of God - may God's favours and peace be upon Him! - Muhammed the son of 'Abdallah, the son of 'Abd al-Muttalib, and the ancestors of His (the Prophet) as far as Adam who are fifty.<sup>7</sup>

Having said that let us now talk about 'Umar Walasma's period and the epoch of his reign and the ones of his children who reigned after him. His own ('Umar Walasma's) life in this world was of one hundred

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It is, therefore, logical to assume that, as the historically noted epoch has attested the transfer of the capital of the kingdom of Adal from Dakar to Harar and then from Harar to Aussa, so during preceding epochs the centre of the Ethiopian Islam must have been Ifât. This has been confirmed by other different sources. The first war waged between the Muslims and the Christians of Ethiopia, of which we know from the Abyssinian Chronicles, is the one of Negus 'Amda Tsyon against Sabr ad-Din, King of Ifât: the chronicler gives the king of Ifât the title of Negus 'Elwan 'Prince of the Infidels' and hence Ifât's supremacy among the Muslims seems to have had been recognized. Now then Sabr ad-Din, Negus 'Amda Tsyon's rival, belonged to 'Umar Walasma's dynasty. (See further on p. 141. note 14); and on the other hand al-Maqrizi (*Kitab al-Ilmam*, Cairo 1895. p. 9) attests that 'Umar Walasma' had established himself in Ifât which remained the seat of his dynasty, But, and since the very same Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon records the king of Adal to whom the successor of Sabr ad-Din had resorted the kingdom [*histoire des guerres de 'amda syon*, cit., edited by Perruchon p. 53 (text) and p. 151 (translations)], we have to admit that the Walasma's of Ifât used to still exercise their predominance over the Muslim States of southern Ethiopia in XIV century, by having other princes as vassals among whom the one of 'Adal; and which afterward that that Walasma' dynasty was transferred, for a wonder, from Ifât to 'Adal, though also transferring its supremacy among the tiny Muslim States to the capital of 'Adal. So and while Ifât is the most important Muslim State during the preceding epoch, Adal became the centre of the Ethiopian Islam in the following epoch: a step farther behind the Emirate of Harar and a jiffy later, the Emirate of Harar and then the Imamate of Aussa followed suit at the head of the Islamic movement. Cf. hereunder on p. 173-185.

<sup>4</sup> In the translation published by Paulitschke (cit., Wor., p. 503) the name is '*Dunjahauri*'. Cf. soon hereafter on pp. 268-269.

<sup>5</sup> In Paulitschke's translation (cit., Wor. p. 504) instead of Isma'il (Solejman) is read.

<sup>6</sup> Regarding the identification of this Shaykh Yusuf Barkatlah, the holy man venerated today by the Somali, see hereunder on p. 170. note 136.

<sup>7</sup> 'Umar Walasma's dynasty is supposed to have descended from Yahya who is the descendent of the famous al-Hasan the grandchild of the Prophet (Cf.-al-Maqrizi's, cit., Wor. on p. 9) for further information.

and twenty years; and before he reigned his age was forty years, and after having reigned for eighty years, the total of this time is one hundred and twenty years. 'Umar Walasma' had three hundred male and three hundred and sixty female children. He chose forty from among them and four among the forty; his story is long, but we have abridged it.<sup>8</sup>

And after him Baziyu<sup>9</sup> reigned for twenty years; after whom his brother Husayn reigned for five years; after him Nasr ad-Din the son of Baziyu reigned for five years; after him Jamal ad Din<sup>10</sup> the son of Baziyu reigned for seven years: he was learned, pious and virtuous and had a genie servant who served him every day.<sup>11</sup> He used to bring him (his genie servant) a letter from Abbawin<sup>12</sup> in one single hour and brought him water from Hawash (river):<sup>13</sup> they used to do all this every day.

And then Abut reigned after him for two years; and then after him reigned Zubayr for two years; then after him reigned Ma'ati-Layla, the sister of Zubayr for two years; then reigned after her Sabr ad-Din<sup>14</sup> for five

<sup>8</sup> This phrase however indicates that the 'History of the Walasma' published here is but an abridgement.

<sup>9</sup> The translation published by Paulitschke has *Jaziwu*; but read as *Baziyu* has been confirmed by al-Maqrizi, cit., Wor.. but who still writes it as *بزيو*

<sup>10</sup> Paulitschke has (Nassir,) (= Nasir) instead of Nasr ad-Din.

<sup>11</sup> The legendary memory of this learned ruler is noticeable in this way and thus it has been kept in these documents.

<sup>12</sup> A marginal note explains: 'واباوين نهر يدور ويدخل في نيل مصر' 'Abbawin is a river which keeps running about and then enters the Nile of Egypt'. Therefore, it means the Blue Nile 'Abbaw, Abbawi in Ethiopic). It is probable that it should be read *أباوي* *Abbawi* instead of *اباوين* the manuscript.

<sup>13</sup> One marginal note says: (sic!) وهو 'اند قبطن) في ارض شوي وعندها عين نهر عواش نهر كثير' 'Endaqabtan is in the land of Shewa and there are the sources of the river 'Awash' which is a river full of water that crosses many countries'. Make note that the manuscript transcribes the name of the river: Awash while this note has it as 'Awash. The real name in Ethiopic is Hawash which became Awash in the Amharic pronunciation though continuing being correctly written with 'H'. In Paulitschke's translation the river is called *Waschi* (SIC!).

<sup>14</sup> This Sabr ad-Din is indicated in al-Maqrizi's as: 'Sabr ad-Din Muhammed ibn نحوى (?) ibn Mansur ibn 'Umar Walasma'. But we find in our own document that Mansur was the son of Baziyu the son of 'Umar Walasma': hence one generation would be missing in al-Maqrizi's list, unless نحوى comes to be corrected and read as *بزيو* and find one's stand then - not before - regarding the name Mansur. The text of Maqrizi's booklet which has been published by Rinck and then by George Zaydan is notoriously very ruined. According to al-Maqrizi's, Sabr ad-Din ملك أوفات في حدود سنة سبعائة 'reigned in Ifât in about 700 *Hegira*'. This date has been confirmed by the chronology of our document, according to which Sabr ad-Din would have reigned for forty seven years before

years; then after him Qat<sup>15</sup> 'Ali reigned for forty years; his son Harb 'Ar'ad<sup>16</sup> reigned after him for two-years; then his son Haqq ad-Din reigned after him and it was him who started the journey towards the holy war through the path of God during a stretch of ten years.<sup>17</sup> He ascended the

Haqq ad-Din started his reign in 778 *Hegira*: hence the start of Sabr ad-Din's reign must be fixed at 731 *Hegira* (15<sup>th</sup> October 1330-3 October 1331 of our common era). On the other side Negus 'Amda Tsyon who reigned from 1314-to 1344 had as a rival, similarly, not during the first years of his reign, Sabr ad-Din king of Ifât who is certainly, therefore, the indicated person by al-Maqrizi as well as by our own document. We only have to clarify the chronological question in a sense that according to our own document Sabr ad-Din would have started his reign during the seventeenth year of Negus 'Amda Tsyon's reign, while regarding the war, according to the story of the Chronicle, there is no fixed date about it, though having undoubtedly occurred during the second part of 'Amda Tsyon's reign by leaving that Negus during the first part of his reign, spend his political activities for the internal problems of the Christian Abyssinia (Cf., the *Cronaca Abbreviata*, ed. by Beguinot, pp. 7-8).

<sup>15</sup> *Qas*, *Qat* in the Amharic pronunciation, used to be a feudal title of the Muslim States in Ethiopia. According to the chronicler of Negus Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1474), the title *Qas*, was borne by the feudal lord of Wag (*Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et Ba'eda Maryam*, cit., p. 112); as a matter of fact it is found in other documents applied also in other Muslim countries, for instance, in the Chronicle of Malak Saggad we find *Konch Qas* head of the *Konch*. See *Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel*, ed., by Conti Rossini, p. 33 (text), p. 38 (translation).

It is noteworthy that the Muslim chronicler should have adopted here the already modern pronunciation *Qat*, while the Chronicle written in Ethiopia retains the old graphic *Qas*.

This Qat 'Ali, who according to our document reigned for 40 years after having succeeded Sabr ad-Din, is certainly the king of Ifât; 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din about whom al-Maqrizi is talking (*Kitab al-Ilmam*, Cairene. ed. cit., on p. 9) is in fact the one who succeeded his father Sabr ad Din. Our document assigns the duration of forty years to the reign of 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din; al-Maqriz'i recounts how 'Ali was first deposed by Negus Sayfa 'Ar'ad (the throne-name of Newaya Krestos the son of 'Amda Tsyon) and then rehabilitated, only then to be imprisoned afresh by Negus Dawit I. So our document counts also the ones spent in prison as years of reign.

<sup>16</sup> Paulitschke erroneously calls him *Harb 'Ar'ad* (cit., Wor., p. 504). al-Maqrizi (cit., Wor., p. 9) says that he was really used to be called. Ahmed but had the nickname of Harb 'Ar'ad; substituted, by dint of Negus Newaya Kristos' wish, the father 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din after his earlier deposition from the throne of Ifât (see above, note 15). According to al-Maqrizi the duration of his reign - within the interval between the two periods of his father's reign - was about eight years and hence not two as our document declares instead. We notice how Ahmed ibn 'Ali assumed the Ethiopic name Harb 'Ar'ad 'Terror of Spears'. which is similar to the throne name assumed by Negus Newaya Krestos, his protector: Sayfa 'Ar'ad 'Terror of Swords'. The Negus, as has been attested by al-Maqrizi', detains him in his own court till the restoration of 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din on the throne.

<sup>17</sup> Haqq ad-Din, according to al-Maqrizi (cit., Wor., pp. 10-11), was Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad's son who rebelled and killed his own uncle ملاصفح and then made peace with the grandfather 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din and assumed the government of Ifât. Having initiated a ruthless war against the Christian Abyssinia, he died in a battle against Negus Dawit I.

The story of these events in ibn Khaldun's, (*Kitab al-Ibar*, ed. by Bulaq, Vol., VI, p. 199) is interesting enough: Haqq ad-Din is called by ibn Khaldun 'Haqq ad-Din' Muhammed ibn 'Ali

throne in 778 of the Prophet's *Hegira*<sup>18</sup> and fell a martyr in 788.<sup>19</sup>

And then Sultan Sa'd ad-Din<sup>20</sup> the son of Ahmed reigned after him and came to the throne in the month of *Safar* of the Year 788 *Hegira*<sup>21</sup> and was killed as a martyr on 6<sup>th</sup> - *Dhu al-Hijjah* 817 *Hegira*.<sup>22</sup> - The duration of his reign was thirty years and two months less five days.

Walasma' (*Wasma'* in this edition is certainly a reading error of the Ms. for *Walasma*); he has been defeated by the king of Christian Abyssinia (whose name has not been mentioned); but later on, having seen the Abyssinian king weakened, the Walasma' take over the power and Sa'd ad-Din the brother of Haqq ad-Din reigns, confirms my own document here (see under, note 20). The Walasma', according to ibn Khaldun, had to re-conquer Ifât by force of arms. So the expedition of Dawit I against Haqq ad-Din took the Abyssinians for the occupation of Ifât, that is to say the very centre of the Muslim state.

<sup>18</sup> 778 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 21<sup>st</sup> May 1376 - 9<sup>th</sup> May 1377.

Al-Maqrizi's chronology does not, therefore, match with our document's, because al-Maqrizi establishes the date of Haqq ad-Din's death at 776 *Hegira* (12<sup>th</sup> June 1374 - 1<sup>st</sup> June 1375. even after having given Haqq ad-Din's reign the duration of about ten years which matches with ours. But according to Wright's chronology, Negus Dawit I started his reign in 1382; so the battle in which Haqq ad-Din died, and which al-Maqrizi himself reports regarding Dawit I could not have occurred in 776 *Hegira*, the year in which Negus Newaya Maryam and not Dawit I reigned.

<sup>19</sup> 788 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1386 - 21<sup>st</sup> January 1387, the fifth year of Negus Dawit I's year of reign (see the preceding note No. 18).

<sup>20</sup> Sa'd ad-Din is, therefore, indicated as the 'son of Ahmed': hence this confirms al-Maqrizi's saying that *Harb 'Ar'ad* was only a nickname borne by Ahmed ibn 'Ali (see p. 142, note 16). Sa'ad ad-Din remained famous in local traditions and the region of Adal took the name of *بر سعد الدين* land of Sa'ad ad-Din after him, probably because of his tragic end in Zaila' area about which al-Maqrizi narrates (cit., *Wor.*, pp. 11-13). It is interesting to note that instead of the booklet *عمدة الصفوة فى حل القهورة* owed to 'Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammed al-Ansari al-Jaziri al-Hanbali and which was written in the second half of the tenth century of *Hegira*, these regions in Adal are indicated as *برابن سعد الدين* the land 'of the son of Sa'd ad-Din', probably more due to the writer's mistake than a hint made at Sultan Badlay ibn Sa'd ad-Din (Cf., p. 145, note 30). The text of the booklet is De Sacy's, *Chrestomathie Arabe* (text) I; p. 139 followed by a (translation, I, p. 412 and further).

<sup>21</sup> *Safar* 788 corresponds to the period of 4<sup>th</sup> March - 1<sup>st</sup> April 1386 AD.

<sup>22</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 817 *Hegira* corresponds to 16<sup>th</sup> February 1415 AD. Then Negus Yes'haq reigned in Christian Abyssinia. Here as well al-Maqrizi's chronology, which establishes the date of Sa'd ad-Din's death at 805 *Hegira*, does not match with that of our document: and once more however al-Maqrizi and the document published here match perfectly regarding the duration established by both to Sa'd ad-Din's reign, that is to say, thirty years. Should we accept the chronology of our document, we can, therefore, assume that al-Maqrizi commits the first error of 12 years in dating the death of Haqq ad-Din (see the preceding note No. 18) which later obliged him to drift into other errors, but still keeping the duration of each reign firm. So we notice why the undertaking against Zaila' and the killing of Sa'd ad-Din had to be referred to Negus Yes'haq and not to Dawit I, as to now generally accepted (Cf. the following note No. 27).

Then his son Sabr ad-Din reigned after him in 817 *Hegira*<sup>23</sup> and there was an interval of one year between his reign and the one of his father. They<sup>24</sup> were in Arabia; then they got down at the port of as-Sayara.<sup>25</sup> Then he reigned over the Muslims after the interval;<sup>26</sup> and died in 825 *Hegira*.<sup>27</sup> The duration of his reign was nine years.

Then came his brother Mansur the son of Sa'd ad-Din to reign for ten years and nine months; some (however) say for seven years but God knows better. Then reigned his brother our lord Sultan Jamal ad-Din the son of Sa'd Ad-Din in the year 828 *Hegira*<sup>28</sup> and the duration of his reign

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<sup>23</sup> That is to say 1415. Even al-Maqrizi (cit., Wor. p. 14) confirms that, when the death of Sa'd occurred, Sabr ad-Din was in Arabia as a guest of the king of Yemen: Ahmed ibn al-Ashraf Isma'il. This demonstrates very well the good relationships that the Muslim states of southern Ethiopia never ceased to enjoy with the Arab Peninsula.

<sup>24</sup> 'They' refers to the ten children of Sa'd ad-Din among whom Sabr ad-Din was the eldest, as al-Maqrizi explains.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Maqrizi as well talks about (cit., Wor., p. 14) *موضع يسمى سياراة* the Cairen ed. really has: *سيارة*; and the translation published by Paulitschke (cit., Wor., p. 505) has: *Im Hafen Von Es-Sajjar*.

<sup>26</sup> This means when he came back from Arabia. Al-Maqrizi as well records the wars conducted by Sabr al-Din against the Christian Abyssinia for winning back the State of Ifât which was totally subjected by them after the death of Sa'd ad-Din.

<sup>27</sup> The date corresponds this time with al-Maqrizi's chronology, according to which Sabr ad-Din really died in 825 *في حدود سنة* 'about the year 825'. Since al-Maqrizi establishes the duration of eight years for Sabr ad-Din's reign, beside the interval of one year, he continues saying that S'ad ad-Din must have died in 817 *Hegira*: a perfectly matching chronology with that of our own document. This, therefore, clearly confirms S'ad ad-Din's death date (817 *Hegira*) and Haqq ad-Din's as well (788 *Hegira*), which have been fixed by our document compared to what al-Maqrizi gives in his story regarding the end of those kings (see p. 143 note 18 and the one here above, note No. 22).

<sup>28</sup> The apparent inconsistency of this date (828 *Hegira*) of the start of Jamal ad-Din's reign, who though and according to the same document reigned after Mansur and hence, seemingly, for ten years after 825 *Hegira*, has been well explained by al-Maqrizi who records how Mansur was imprisoned by Negus Yes'haq in 828 after only two years of reign. Our document, an in the case of 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din's (see p. 142 note 15), calculates as the years of reign those also spent in prison, still counting these same years as the period of the reign of the successor. This clarifies the differences found in the chronologies.

The year 828 *Hegira* corresponds to the period 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1424 – 12<sup>th</sup> November 1425, the twelfth year of Negus Yes'haq's reign. It is a wonder to see how *the abridged Chronicle* constantly omits any hint of wars waged against the Muslims in this period by all the Negus: neither those of Amda Tsyon I, nor the ones of Dawit I and nor these of Yes'haq have been mentioned by the Ethiopian chronicler in whatsoever manner and to add insult to injury, not even Zar'a Ya'qob's undertakings make mention of them.

was seven years. He fell a martyr on the day of Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> in the month of *Jumad al-Awwal* of the year 836.<sup>29</sup> Then reigned after him his brother our lord Sultan Badlay the son of Sa'd ad-Din<sup>30</sup> on the fourth of the month of *Jumad al-Awwal* of the year 836<sup>31</sup> and the duration of his reign was thirteen years less twenty four days. He died a martyr<sup>32</sup> at the end of 'Asr of the twenty sixth of the month of *Ramadan*,<sup>33</sup> as a Saturnian in Annatra,<sup>34</sup> in the year 849 *Hegira*. And it is said that according to some the duration of his reign was fourteen years less three months but God knows better.

Then his son Sultan Muhammed the son of Badlay reigned after him starting from Saturday, 26 days past the month of *Ramadan* in the year 849 *Hegira*,<sup>35</sup> and the duration of his reign was twenty-six years. He

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<sup>29</sup> The 10<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Awwal* 836 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1433 AD. Al-Maqrizi instead says that Jamal ad-Din died in *Jumad al-Akhirah* 835 *Hegira* (Corresponding to the period of 4<sup>th</sup> February- 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1432). Jamal ad-Din was killed, as al-Maqrizi reports, by his own relatives; also in other time and in similar cases do we find the phrase: 'قتل شهيدا' 'was killed a martyr' in these documents. Was this due to a conspiracy agreed upon with the king of the Christian Abyssinia?

<sup>30</sup> Al-Maqrizi calls him: Shihab ad-Din Ahmed Badlay (cit., Wor., pp. 119-20) and adds saying that he was still alive in the year when al-Maqrizi himself collected the materials for his book, that is to say, in 839 *Hegira*, as has really been confirmed by our document.

In Zar'a Ya'qob's Ethiopian chronicle instead, the Sultan is constantly designated as *Arwe Badlay* 'the Wild Beast Badlay', but a need should arise to know the ordinary meaning of *arwe* or could it rather deal with the popular etymology regarding the honorary Muslim title of *Awra'i*, which we will see being borne, for example, by the Balaw nobility? Cf. the text Va, note 187). These popular etymologies for foreign names are however relatively frequent in the Ethiopian Chronicles and suffice it to remember the ones of *Zenahu La-Oromo*.

<sup>31</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Awwal* 836 *Hegira* corresponds to 27<sup>th</sup> December 1432 AD Badlay, therefore, had started his reign six days before the death of his brother Jamal ad-Din. Do we have to deduce that he was one of the ringleaders of the rebellion which ended by killing Jamal ad-Din?

<sup>32</sup> Badlay died in a battle against Negus Zar'a Ya'qob in the region of Dawaro, as is told by the Ethiopian Chronicle of that Negus (*Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et Ba'eda Maryam*, ed., by Perruchon, cit., p. 88).

<sup>33</sup> The 26<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 849 *Hegira* corresponds to 26<sup>th</sup> December 1445 AD. The Ethiopian Chronicle of Zar'a Ya'qob, cit., fixes the date at 29<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Tahsas* (25<sup>th</sup> December) without indicating the year (cit., Wor., p. 64 and 88).

<sup>34</sup> *An-Natra* is the eight out of 28 *Lunar Stations* in Arab astrology. This astrological reference is missing in Paulitschke's published translation.

<sup>35</sup> Muhammed ibn Badlay submitted to Negus Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1478 AD) by committing himself to the payment of an annual tribute. For the first time he, the descendant of the



died on Wednesday night, the third of the month of *Rajab* 876 *Hegira*.<sup>36</sup> Then his son Sultan Ibrahim the son of Muhammed reigned after him starting from Wednesday night, before the burial of his own father, 876 *Hegira*,<sup>37</sup> and the duration of his reign was one year and five mouths. He died on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month *Dhual-Hijjah* of the year 876.<sup>38</sup> Then his brother Sultan Shams ad-Din the son of Muhammed reigned starting from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month of *Dhual-Hijjah* of the year 876 *Hegira*,<sup>39</sup> and

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Walasma', is called by the Ethiopian Chronicle: the King of Adal and not the King of Ifât (Cf., the preceding note 14). See the quotations in *Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et Ba'eda Maryam* pp. 131-144.

<sup>36</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> *Rajab* 836 corresponds to 16<sup>th</sup> December 1471 AD. But in Paulitschke's translation the date instead is 870 *Hegira*, but it is a matter of an oversight because in the same translation we find it say that the reign of Muhammed ibn Badlay started in 849 and last for 26 years. See further on notes 37 and 38.

<sup>37</sup> Paulitschke has instead, 875, but seems to be the contrary to that to which deals with an oversight of our own amanuensis. See further on note 36 and the following note No. 38. Perruchon presents *Lada'e 'Esman* as the successor to Muhammed ibn Badlay (see *Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob*, etc. cit., p. XXXIV and *Histoire De Eskender, 'Amda Tsyon Ii Et Na'od*, edited by Perruchon, p. 323). As a matter of fact the passage of Negus Ba'eda Maryam's chronicle on which Perruchon founds himself says: *Wa-Sami'o Ameha Negus-Enna Zena Mes'atu La-Makonnena Adal Za-Semu Lada'e 'Esman Em-Dekhera Mota Mehmadi Za-Takayado Qadami*: «and then our Negus heard the news of the arrival of the governor of Adal whose name was *Lada'e 'Esman*, after the death of Muhammed (ibn Badlay) who had already made an alliance with him (Negus)».

This passage induces one to suppose that *Makonnena Adal* could have been only another dignitary of that Muslim state, anybody save the sultan: however the translation of Perruchon, *Le Gouverneur D'adal, Lada'e 'Esman*, Muhammed's successor, *Avec Qui Il Avait Fait Alliance* is inexact, in the sense rather than the text which does not say clearly that *Lada'e 'Esman* was Muhammed ibn Badlay's successor.

<sup>38</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 876 *Hegira* corresponds to 11<sup>th</sup> May 1472 AD, But should we accept 3<sup>rd</sup> *Rajab* 876 as the date of Muhammed Badlay's death (see the preceding notes 36 and 27) there will result was that Ibrahim ibn Muhammed would have reigned for only five months and hence not one year and five months, as our same document claims. So we need to accept the date of the start of Ibrahim's reign as it is and hence the date of Muhammed ibn Badlay's death in 875 *Hegira* (according to the two dates indicated by Paulitschke: see the preceding note 37), or else we will have to assume that Ibrahim must have reigned for one year together with his father and the duration of the two reigns must have overlapped (as for example in the above-cited case on p. 142 note 15)? If we accept the first of these two hypotheses, Muhammed ibn Badlay would have died on 3<sup>rd</sup> *Rajab* 875 and that is 26<sup>th</sup> December 1470 AD, and not on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1471 (see the preceding note 36).

<sup>39</sup> The expedition of Negus Eskender against Adal in 1479 AD, took place during Shams ad-Din ibn Muhammed's reign; the Negus reached as far as Dakar which he devastated, but on his way back from Dakar he was taken unawares and broken by the Muslims (see *Histoire D'Eskender*, cit., on p. 357). It is a wonder that our document does not have this piece of information related to this Muslim victory.



the duration of his reign was fifteen years and four months. Sultan Shams ad-Din was killed on Thursday in the month of *Jumad al-Awwal* of the year 892 *Hegira*.<sup>40</sup>

Then Ibrahim the Son of Qat Naser ad-Din reigned after him in 892 *Hegira*,<sup>41</sup> and the duration of his reign was ten months. He was killed on 20<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* of 893 *Hegira*.<sup>42</sup>

Then Sultan Muhammed the son of Azhar ad-Din the son of 'Ali the son of Abu Bakr the son of Sa'd ad-Din reigned after him in 983 *Hegira*,<sup>43</sup> and the duration of his reign was thirty one years and some say (instead) that he reigned for thirty two years. His was the longest reign among the monarchs of Walasma' descent.

And after him Sultan 'Ali the son of Muhammed the son of Azhar ad-Din came to reign and God knows better; and the duration of his reign was two years. And after him Sultan Fakhr ad-Din came to reign for one year or one half of a year.<sup>44</sup> And, thereafter, our lord Sultan Abu Bakr

<sup>40</sup> The month *Jumad al-Awwal* 892 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 25<sup>th</sup> April 24<sup>th</sup> May 1487 AD.

<sup>41</sup> This Ibrahim the son of *Qat* Nasr ad-Din, who comes to the throne after the killing of Shams ad-Din comes to be himself killed after only ten months of reign and would seem to have been an alien usurper of the Walasma'. Regarding the title *Qat* see p. 142 note 15.

<sup>42</sup> The 20<sup>th</sup> *Rabi. al-Awwal Hegira* corresponds to 4<sup>th</sup> March 1488 AD.

<sup>43</sup> In *Futuh al-Habashah* this Sultan is called 'Muhammed ibn Azar ibn Abi Bakr', but could only be an error already recognized by Basset (*Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., translation, p. 9, note 2). At the end of Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din the reaction by the Emirs against the Walasma' started a reaction which later concluded creating the dictatorship spear-headed by the two *conquerors*; Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed and Nur ibn Mujahid.

<sup>44</sup> Based on *Futuh al-Habashah* Sultan Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din was assassinated during his return from a campaign against Negus Lebna Dengel: and starting from his death up to the accession of Sultan Abi Bakr ibn Muhammed his son to the throne the throne of Adal was occupied by other five princes, all aliens to the Walasma' family, namely: 1<sup>st</sup> Muhammed ibn Abi Bakr ibn Mahfuz, who reigned for one year; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ibrahim ibn Ahmed, who reigned for three months; 3<sup>rd</sup> the slave Wasane who reigned for three months; 4<sup>th</sup> Mansur ibn Mahfuz ibn Muhammed who reigned for five months; 5<sup>th</sup> Garad *Abun* who reigned for seven years, including (though) the years of his own preceding government as Garad (see) *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., pp. 5-6 (text) and pp. 9-15 (transl.).

It is noteworthy how our document does not mention the names of these sovereigns alien to the Walasma', but only two Walasma' individuals: 'Ali ibn Muhammed and Fakhr ad-Din who reigned - nominally, we must understand - during this stormy period.

the son of our lord Muhammed the son of Azhar ad-Din<sup>45</sup> reigned and God knows better. He was the one who transferred the people and, therefore, the army from the city of Dakar to Harar<sup>46</sup> so he established himself there in the month of *Sha'ban* of the year 926, short of seventy four years from 1000 from the *Hegira* of the Prophet, Peace be Upon Him!<sup>47</sup>

### Notes

This document is, therefore, the compendium of the history of the Walasma' dynasty starting from its founder 'Umar Walasma' up to the transfer of the capital to Harar. The first part is really more laconic than the second one and the first explicit chronological reference is the one relative to Sultan Haqq ad-Din, Negus Dawit I's Rival.

The leadership of the Muslim movement was conducted by the Walasma' in its first stage in Ifât passing to Adal later. Our document does not touch upon the reasons for this transfer clearly, but, while Negus 'Amda Tsyon I's chronicle gives the king of Ifât supremacy among other Muslim princes, the one of Negus Zar'a Ya'qob soon talks about Ifât as if it were one of the provinces of the Abyssinian Kingdom ruled by one of the Negus' daughter first and then by a certain 'Eraq Masare, a dignitary title of the Abyssinian court. So it is clear how Ifât or at least a part of it was occupied by Christian Abyssinia between the reign of 'Amda Tsyon I

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<sup>45</sup> It is Sultan Abu Bakr, who is Gagn's; (Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed) rival who comes later to be killed by him, as told by *Futuh al-Habashah* [*Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., p. 15 (text) and p. 33 (translation)].

<sup>46</sup> In this manner hence, Harar became the capital of the Muslim State and, therefore, the centre of Islam in Ethiopia. Basset's observation (*Histoire De La Conquete De Abyssinie*, cit., (translation) p. 14 note 1) contesting the assertion made by Monsignore Taurin de Cahagne who had attributed the foundation of Harar to Nur ibn Mujahid, is absolutely inexact. Now the surrounding wall of the city of Harar is popularly attributed to Nur ibn Mujahid; however, even the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon I made mention about *The Three Sovereigns of Harar* [see *Histoire Des Guerres De Amda Tsyon*, cit., p. 52 (text) and p. 150 (translation)].

<sup>47</sup> The month of *Sha'ban* 926 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 17<sup>th</sup> July-14<sup>th</sup> August 1520 AD.

(1314-1344) and Zar'a Ya'cob (1434-1468). This has been confirmed by ibn Khaldun and by al-Maqrizi who, albeit not even hinting at the reasons for this transfer of the capital, records the Walasama' as the rulers in his writings (1435-1436) while the capital was already in Dakar. At last we notice what al-Maqrizi himself says about the sad Muslim conditions in Ethiopia after the tragic end of Sa'd ad-Din while defending Zaila' and after - to make it worse - the imprisonment of Mansur ibn Sa'd ad-Din: hence, during Negus Yes'haq's reign the Muslim State underwent its most serious historical vicissitude of this period. It is logical to assume then, that the Walasma' had to transfer their capital to a safer place than that of Ifât and that is the lowland of Adal.<sup>48</sup>

The Muslim State would have to go through another crisis during the closing years of the XV century and during the first twenty five years of the XVI century: namely, the formation of a strong party, rival to the old Walasma' dynasty, which often succeeded in assuming power with violence, till one of their own rank and file Ahmed ibn Ibrahim arose and assembled all around him for the great assault on Christian Abyssinia. It is not hard to imagine that this opposition could have arisen in Adal as a local reaction against that Ifât dynasty, a foreign one which transplanted itself in the country and thus restricting the autonomy and indeed the independence of that region as if it were a fait-accompli.

It is doubtful if Walasma' was a dignitary first name or just the proper name of this famous dynasty. However, the certain thing is that starting from the days of Negus Ba'eda Maryam (1468-1478) to our own, the feudal lords of Ifât as the vassals of the Negus, bore this title. This demonstrates why even after the transfer of the dynasty to Adal, Ifât, though subjected by Abyssinia, kept this old tradition in some way or another. I will be providing other proofs regarding this hypothesis as soon as I published the collected materials pertaining to the Argobba Muslims, the inhabitants of that region today.

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<sup>48</sup> It is definite that during Ba'da Maryam's reign (1468-1478) the transfer had already occurred. See p. 146. note 35.

We ought to, at last, note that the oldest personage of the 'Walasma' about whom mention has been made by the Ethiopian Chronicle is Haqq ad-Din who was defeated in Ifât itself by Negus 'Amda Tsyon I during the first part of his reign. Basset and Perruchon identify this Haqq ad-Din with Haqq ad-Din 'Umar who was mentioned by al-Maqrizi and who had succeeded Baziyu ibn 'Umar. But to contrast this hypothesis the document of our chronology vetoes it because it puts an interval of thirty years between Haqq ad-Din ibn 'Umar's reign and the one of Sabr ad-Din, 'Amda Tsyon's rivals. Now and since 'Amda Tsyon reigned precisely for thirty years, it is impossible that he himself fought against Haqq ad-Din ibn 'Umar. It would seem logical to admit that Haqq ad-Din who has been mentioned in the Ethiopian Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon, is nobody but one of the princes of Ifât who belonged to the 'Walasma' dynasty and not one of the monarchs whose detailed list has been supplied by our document; unless we have to assume that it is a matter of arithmetic due to analogical reasons to fit the above indicated ones on Notes 28.

### § 3 The Last Sovereigns of The Walasma' Dynasty

In the manuscript of the 'History of the Walasma', which I was able to copy in Harar, this addition is found in the margin of the last page:

ثم تولى مولانا السلطان علي بن عمر دين يوم الخميس السابع في شهر محرم وقت الضحى سنة ستين وتسعمائة من الهجرة وكشفت الشمس يوم السبت الثالث ... وتوفي بعده علي بن عمر دين يوم الثلاثاء وقت الضحى السادس عشر في جماد الاخر من شهور سنة اثنى وستين وتسعمائة وكانت مدة ولايته سنة وخمسة اشهر وعشر ايام وتولى بعده اخوه مولانا السلطان بركات بن عمر دين يوم الجمعة وقت الضحى 26 من الشهر المذكور والسنة المذكورة

Then our lord Sultan 'Ali ibn 'Umar-Din<sup>49</sup> came to reign on the day of Thursday, the seventh of the month of *Muharram*, in the hour of the morning, of the year 960 *Hegira*,<sup>50</sup> and there was an eclipse of the sun during the day of Saturday, the third<sup>51</sup> ... and then 'Ali ibn 'Umar-Din died on the day of Tuesday, in the hour of the morning, the sixteenth day of the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 962:<sup>52</sup> and the duration of his reign was one year, five months and ten days.<sup>53</sup> And after him our lord Sultan

<sup>49</sup> This Sultan 'Ali ibn 'Umar-Din was, therefore, the son of that 'Umar-Din who was nominated sultan by Gagn (Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the left-handed) in place of Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad.

<sup>50</sup> The 7<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 960 *Hegira* corresponds to 24<sup>th</sup> December 1552 AD. Then, having succeeded Gagn, Emir Nur ibn Mujahid was the effective leader of the Muslim State. It is really characteristic that, while these documents regarding the Walasma' party do not hint at all at the effective rulers of Adal (in this case: Gagn and Nur ibn Mujahid!) in front whom the Walasma' sultans were the ephemeral *Rois Faineants*, and on the other hand the documents of the rival party to the Walasma' do not even mention the sultans of that dynasty but only talk about the achievements of Gagn and that of Nur, as we are going to see (Cf. also note 44 pp. 147-148).

<sup>51</sup> The date is illegible.

<sup>52</sup> The 16<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 962 *Hegira* is equivalent to 8<sup>th</sup> August 1555 AD.

<sup>53</sup> The dates supplied by this document have to be revised to establish the duration of 'Ali ibn 'Umar-Din's reign to read two years and so, and not one year. So, we have to assume an error in either the initial date or the one of the end of the reign.

Barakat ibn 'Umar-Din<sup>54</sup> came to reign on the day of Friday at the hour of morning, 26<sup>th</sup> of the above-mentioned month and the above-mentioned year.<sup>55</sup>

## NOTES

One can deduce from this document how, still in 960 and 962 *Hegira* - after the great undertakings of Gagn against the Christian Abyssinia - a head with a full value and prestige of Nur ibn Mujahid found it convenient to respect and keep the nominal power of the Walasma'.

This demonstrates that, despite all the rest, the old dynasty which led the Muslims in wars against Christian Abyssinia for two centuries still had so much respect to impose, a respect for itself, also on a rival such as the forces of Emir Nur. The position of Gagn and that of Nur in respect of the Ethiopian Muslim dynasty is, hence, similar in a certain way to the one the Oromo *condottieres* found themselves in two centuries later compared to the Ethiopian Christian dynasty: as the Solomites themselves were nominal monarchs only for about one century so their rivals the Walasma' came to be.

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<sup>54</sup> Barakat ibn 'Umar-Din was 'Ali ibn 'Umar-Din's brother.

<sup>55</sup> Was it this Barakat the sultan who died in 966 *Hegira* in a battle against Hamalmal? (See p. 200 note 260: text VI). We notice that Paulitschke however gives to the rival sultan of Hamalmal the name Habin.

#### § 4 The History of Kings: From 926 To 991 Hegira

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله والصلوة والسلام على رسول الله صلعم وعلى اله وصحبه تسليما وبعد ذلك فهذا تاريخ الملوك وكان انتقال الجراد ابون والسلطان ابي بكر بن محمد اظهر الدين من ذكر الى هرر للاقامة فيها في شهر شعبان 926 من الهجرة وقتل جراد ابون يوم الثلاثاء سابع في شهر شعبان وقت المغرب سنة 931 من الهجرة وكان خورج الامام احمد بن ابراهيم لفتح الحبشة سنة 937 وعاش بعد الفتح اثني عشر سنة وستة اشهر رحمة الله تعالى عليه وتولى بعاده مولانا الامير امير المؤمنين نور بن مجاهد سنة 959 وتوفي الى رحمة الله سنة 975 في شهر ربيع الاول اخر اليوم الثاني يوم الجمعة وكان له رحمه الله تعالى السيرة الحسنة التامة في العدل والانصاف خصوصا من نفسه وهو صاحب الفتح الثاني وقاتل ملك الحبشة فحارب الملك المكنى باطناف سجد فقنته وقطع رأسه ونزل به الى بر سعد الدين ورايت انا بعيني رأس الملك لعنة الله عليه وخرب بلاد الحبشة ثم نزل الى بلاده ووقع بعد رجوعه من هذا الغزو قحط عظيم في بلادنا حتى بلغ قيمة الصاع من الذرة اثني عشر اشراقي وصاع الملح خمسة وعشرين اشراقي وقيمة البقر ثلاثمائة اشرشفي او اكثر وكان الارومو تخطف الناس في جميع الجهات وصبر الله الناس في هذه البلاد وصبر الامير نور صبيرا جميلا وازداد يقينه وعفته عن اموال الناس وكان بعض الناس ياكل لحم ولده وزوجته وكنت يوما جالسا في مجلس شيخنا القاضي جمال الدين فاذا برجل مربوط حمل في ظهره شيئا فمثل بين يدي شيخنا القاضي فقال الذي جابه ان هذا الرجل قتل زوجته وقطع اعضائها لياكل فوضع الحمل فاذا هو انسانة قد قطع أعضائها كما يفعل في الشاة اذا ذبحت للاكل ففزع شيخنا القاضي وامر بدفن الاعضاء وجرى مثل ذلك يوم اخر فسبحان من يمتحن عباده بما يشاء ولم يزل الامير المذكور حاملا للاعباء كانه حمل حتى فرج الله القحط فكان صاع الذرة بخمس محلق او اربع محلق والارومو تخطف الناحية وخرب بلاد سيم وبلاد شوى وبلاد نجب وجدايه وذكر واكثر بلاد هرجايا وبنى من بقي من الناس الحصون وحفر الخندق وبينما هم على ذلك قحطوا ايضا مرة اخرى حتى بلغ صاع ذرة اشرفين والملح خمس اشرشفي فمات الامير نور في وسط القحط رحمه الله تعالى وغفر له وكان سبب موته بالطاعون بعد رجوعه عن غزوة الارومو ثلاث اشهر كاملة سنة 975 ثم تولى بعده امير عثمان الحبشي في السنة المذكورة وهو اول من اباح الخمر واستحل اموال المسلمين من اليتامى واطهر المنكرات ومنع الخمس وارتكب الشوات وترك المعروضات واباح الحظرات واخذ اموال اليتامى التي كان خلاها الامير نور عند جمال الدين واما

الذى هو الذاب بماله ونفسه عن المسلمين في بندر زيلع المحروسة وانتشر ذكره الى باب الروم فهو الشريف الحسيب النسيب السيد محمد بن السيد عمر الشاطري وكانت عدة المال الذى اخذه الامير عثمان خمسة وثلاثين الفا وكل الف منها خمسون ذهبا ابريزيا وكانت مدة ولايته سنتين ولم يزل العلماء ممن من الله عليه بالاستقامة في الحق ينكرون فعاله ويزجروه عن مخالفة الشرع حتى من الله بفرجة للمسلمين فوقع بين الارومو والمسلمين صلح يجي الارومو بالاسعار ويبتاع الثياب وشرطوا عليه ايضا ان كل من دخل من عند الارومو الى المسلمين يردون لهم فامر الامير عثمان الجراد جبريل وهو صهر الامير نور انه يخرج الى سوق الارومو فخرج فلما فرغت السوق نزل بمن معه من اتباعه الى اوسه انكارا لفعل هذا الامير من مخالفته لكتاب الله تعالى اول شهر ذي القعدة سنة 976 فجلس في موضع يسمى زجراير فبينما هو جالس ان امرأة اتت من عند المشايخ الى الجراد جبريل وهي مستجيبة به من الارومو توبة الى دين الاسلام وكانت الارومو صالحت الامير كما تقدم فارسل الجراد جبريل الى الامير عثمان يقول له ان امرأة دخلت في دين الاسلام واصلها من المسلمين فان الارومو يطلبوا منا ردها ولايجوز لنا ان نردها اليهم وقد نهانا الله سبحانه وتعالى بقوله وان علموهن مؤمنات فلا ترجعهن الى الكفار لا هن حل لهم ولا هم يحلون لهن وامره الامير ان يردها الى الارومو خذلهم الله تعالى فابى الجراد جبريل ان يردها لطاعة المخلوق في معصية الخالق فخرج من زجراير مهاجرا لدينه الى اوسه واجتمع مع اخيه جراد احمد وخلاه بها ونزل الى زيلع وكان وصوله الى زيلع اليوم السابع عشر في شهر ذي القعدة سنة 976 وخرج الى اوسه ثانيا وذلك يوم الخميس 18 في الشهر المذكور وخرج الى زيلع مع اخيه جراد احمد المذكور يوم السبت الرابع في شهر ذي الحجة فارسل الامير عثمان الجراد بلو محمد سيم جراد ليحارب مع الجراد جبريل وضم له ابن اخيه جراد عمر فنزلوا الى زيلع والامير عثمان جالس في اوسه والقي الله في قلوب العامة والخاصة حب جراد جبريل والدعا له ليلا ونهارا فلما نزل سيم جراد فغلبوه وقتل جراد جبريل رحمه الله تعالى فقام على الراية السلطان طلحة بن عباس وكان من خواص جراد جبريل ومحبه فقام معه اخوا جراد جبريل بن الامير نور فطردوا سيم جراد واخذوا ما كان العسكر فجاءوا الى هرر فنصرهم الله من الجراد محمد هرجاي الذى خلاه الامير عثمان في الهرر والامير عثمان جالس في اوسه ولا له علم بهزيمة جيشه وباخذ بلاده هرر ثم اتفق علماء هرر على ولاية سلطان طلحة فتعرفت عسكر امير عثمان وجاء هو بنفسه وكان قتل الجراد جبريل اليوم الخامس في شهر ذي الحجة وتولية سلطان طلحة اول عاشوراء سنة 977 وليس الجمادور وضربوا النقاير في مدينة هرر فرحا لولاية السلطان طلحة بن الوزير عباس ابن اخي الامام احمد صاحب الفتح وفي ولاية لم يخرج الى الغزو ولا للجهاد وعزل



بسبب ذلك في اليوم السابع من شهر ذي الحجة الحرام سنة 978 وتولى بعده السلطان نصير بن عثمان في ذلك اليوم في السنة المذكورة وكانت ولايته سنتين ومات رحمه الله ودفن في مدينة هرر ثم تولى بعده ولده السلطان محمد بن نصير بن عثمان بن بدلاي في سنة 980 وخرج غازيا الى بلاد الحبشة يوم الخميس الرابع في شهر شوال وخلا اخاه الوزير حامد بن السلطان نصير على هرر ولما علمت الارومو ان المجاهدين طلعوا ارض الحبشة استباحوا بر سعد الدين واخربوا مائة قرية من قرى المسلمين ولا حيل ولا قوة الا بالله سبحانه وتعالى حتى وصلوا الى مدينة هرر وحاصروا اهلها مدة ايام ووقع القتال بينهم على باب الهرر حتى امتلاء الباب من قتلى ورجعت الارومو وطن الوزير نحو عشرين طعنة وسقط الخندق وسلمه الله تعالى وادخلوه في مدينة هرر وعاش واما ما كان من امر السلطان محمد ابن نصير فانه التقى مع الكفرة وحصل بينهم قتال عظيم ونصره الله تعالى عليهم وبعد ان واحد من المسلمين يقال له اسماء الدين خان بالمجاهدين ودخل الى عند الكفرة المخدولين فما هو الا ان دخل الى الملك حتى اوقع الله الذل في قلوب المجاهدين وتهزموا من غير قتال ولزموا جميعهم وقتلهم رحمهم الله تعالى واموات المسلمين واما ما كان من امر بر سعد الدين بعد ان خربت البلاد واستولى طائفة الفساد يعني الارومو على العباد فاطهر الله عز وجل بفضلهم رجلا يقال له منصور بن محمد بن ايوب في شهر جماد الاول سنة 983 واقام في هرر وقاتل الارومو واخذ من الصومال مائة وخمسين فرسا مهرات وجمع نحو ثلاثمائة رجلا ونزل الى زيلع في اواخر شهر محرم الحرام وخرج الى بلد اوسه يريد الضبط على الهيجن هاشم خلاه السلطان محمد المذكور ووصل الى اوسه اليوم الثاني في شهر صفر ولزم الهيجن هاشم وخرج يريد الى جناح سر في جماد الاخر سنة 984 فلما وصل الى موضع يسمى ابتريل قريب من بلاد اوسه لزموه اصحابه وتولى بعده الامام محمد جاسا واقام في ارض اوسه وهو اول من اقام المجاهدين بها وذلك في شهر جماد الاخر سنة 984 وقتل بها يوم الجمعة السابع في شهر ذي القعدة سنة 991 قتله الارومو

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praised be God and benediction and peace be on the Messenger of God - peace be upon Him - and upon His family and upon His Companions!

Having said so, I present this History of Kings.<sup>56</sup> The transfer of

<sup>56</sup> There are two different versions regarding this *History*: one titled *Tarikh al-Muluk* 'the History of Kings', which is as a matter of fact the one of this text III; the other is titled *Tarikh al-Mujahidin*; 'The History of Combatants in the Holy War', which is the published one hereunder

Garad Abun and of Abu Bakr of the son of Muhammed (the son of) Azhar ad-Din from Dakar to Harar to settle took place in the month of *Sha'ban* of the year 926 *Hegira*.<sup>57</sup> Garad Abun was killed on the day of Tuesday, the seventh of the month of *Sha'ban* at the time of dusk, of the year 931 *Hegira*.<sup>58</sup> And Imam Ahmed the son of Ibrahim left for the conquest of Abyssinia in the year 937;<sup>59</sup> and lived (more) for twelve years and six months after the conquest<sup>60</sup> - may the Mercy of the Almighty God be on him.

And after him, our lord the Prince, the Prince of the Believers, Prince (Amir) Nur the son of Mujahid<sup>61</sup> started his reign in the year 959<sup>62</sup> and passed to the mercy of God in the year 975 in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* at the end of the second day (of the said month) which was

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(text IV) and whose translation - incomplete - was already published by Paulitschke in his book titled Harar, which has been quoted often.

<sup>57</sup> This *History of Kings* is thus unified with the History of The Walasma' (text 1) which really comes to a close upon the transfer of the capital from Dakar to Harar. It is to be noted that in this case as well while the History of The Walasma' mentions only the transfer of Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed, the History of Kings talks also about the transfer of Garad Abun. It refers to Garad Abun ibn Adas, who had exercised the hegemony in Adal for seven years, by keeping the sultan in a condition of inferiority. Cf. text 19 p. 147 148, note 44 and *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., 9 p. 6 (text) and pp. 13-15 (translation).

<sup>58</sup> The 7<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 931 *Hegira* corresponds to 30<sup>th</sup> May 1525 AD. This date mentioned in our document has its own importance for the chronology of the great Muslim invasion of Abyssinia, the dates which were not at all specified by '*Arab-Faqih*' in the first part of his story.

<sup>59</sup> 937 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 25<sup>th</sup> August 1530-14<sup>th</sup> 1531 AD.

<sup>60</sup> The demise of Gagn Ahmed ibn Ibrahim Sahib al-Fat'h, according to our document, therefore, occurred in 949 *Hegira*: this perfectly corresponds to the chronology of the Ethiopian chronicles which establish the date of the event in the month of *Yakkatit* 7035 of the Year of Creation and that is to say in February, 1543 AD (see *Chronique De Galiwdewos*, cit., ed., by Perruchon, p. 135. note 2 and *Cronaca Abbreviata*, ed., by Beguinot, p. 29, note 2). Then 949 *Hegira* actually corresponds to the period of 17<sup>th</sup> April 1542 - 5<sup>th</sup> April 1543 AD and, therefore, includes February 1543, the date of the battle according to the Ethiopian chronicles.

<sup>61</sup> Nur ibn Mujahid was the son of one of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed's sister who had married Del Wambara, the wife of his above-mentioned uncle Ahmed ibn Ibrahim after his death. As is known, Nur ibn Mujahid had defeated and killed *Nugus* Glawdewos on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1559 AD, after having been pushed to war by his own wife Del Wambara, according to what has been told by the Ethiopian chronicles (see *Cronaca Abbreviata*, ed. by Perruchon, p. 31).

<sup>62</sup> 959 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 29<sup>th</sup> December 1551-17<sup>th</sup> December 1552 AD. Nur was in the same position of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim Sahib al-Fat'h, because, as we have already seen, the Walasma' Sultans were still continuing to reign in Adal at least nominally. If the date of our document is accurate, ten years must have elapsed between Grants demise and the accession of Nur ibn Mujahid.

Friday.<sup>63</sup> He had - may the mercy of the Almighty God be upon him! - a good conduct in life, perfection in justice and endowed with the best qualities, especially the spiritual ones. He was the 'Second Conqueror'<sup>64</sup> and had taught the king of Abyssinia a lesson and made war against the king nicknamed Atnaf Saggad<sup>65</sup> and killed him.<sup>66</sup> He decapitated him and took his head with him (in triumph) to the country of Sa'd ad-Din.<sup>67</sup> I personally saw the head of the king with my own eyes - may the curse of God be upon him!<sup>68</sup> He devastated the Abyssinian countries; then he returned to his own country.

There occurred a great famine in our country<sup>69</sup> a little while after his return from this expedition, a so serious one that the price of one *sa'* of grain reached the price of twelve *Ashrafi*<sup>70</sup> and that of salt twenty five *Ashrafi*- and the price of cattle three hundred *Ashrafi* or more. The

<sup>63</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 975 corresponds to 6<sup>th</sup> September 1567 AD. Therefore, Nur lived for eight years more after the death of Negus Glawdewos.

<sup>64</sup> The first 'Conqueror' (*Sahib al-Fat'h*) was Gragn Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed.

<sup>65</sup> Atnaf Saggad was the throne name of Negus Glawdewos. It is amazing that this name of his remained in the form of Atnaf Saggad in these Muslim historical documents: that is why this demonstrates, combined with other indications, (see text I, note 9, where the title Qas appears soon as Qat; see also *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., p. 36 i (text), what we are driving at by watching 'Arab Faqih transcribes ṣ and ṭ with ط) according to the prevailing pronunciation of T as the letter S in these regions during the XVI century; just as is occurring in nowadays Amharic, save the Gojjam regional speech which has retained this SH.

<sup>66</sup> As a matter of fact Glawdewos was killed by Nur ibn Mujahid's soldiers who then took his head to the emir, See *Chronique De Glawdewos*, pp. 178-179 (translation), pp. 101-102 (text) and *Cronaca Abbreviata*, ed. by Beguinot, p. 33.

<sup>67</sup> 'The land of Sa'd ad-Din', that is Adal. See text I. p. 143 note 20. The *Cronaca Abbreviata* (p. 33) also tells us how Negus Glawdewos's cut off head was taken to Adal.

<sup>68</sup> This phrase: *I personally saw the head of the king with my own eyes*, like other we will be going to see, demonstrated that the author of this part of our document was a contemporary to Emir Nur.

<sup>69</sup> The description of this terrible famine, which raged in Adal immediately after Emir Nur's victory over the Negus, is confirmation of what the Abridged Chronicle says that it never rained in Adal for three years after the defeat of the Negus. The Ethiopian chronicler would naturally attribute this famine to the divine punishment for the decapitation of Negus Glawdewos' corpse; it is even said by one of the codex of the Abridged Chronicle that it would not rain in Adal anymore «until that (cut-off) head was not returned to his body» (see the *abridged* Chronicle, p. 33 note 1); which occurred thanks to some merchants who were able to exhume the cut-off head and take it to Antioch (Ansokiya) in Ifât.

<sup>70</sup> I am at a loss to tell exactly to which money this *Ashrafi* corresponds to.

Oromo<sup>71</sup> in the meantime were looting in all directions but God gave the people patience during this misfortune. Amir Nur's patience was more graceful and he (even) deepened his faith and his respect for others' belongings was the more. Some of them ate the flesh of their own children and that of their own spouses.<sup>72</sup>

One day<sup>73</sup> I was sitting in the tribunal of our Shaykh Jamal ad-Din, the Qadi; and here we are in front of a tied-up man carrying something on his back and who stood in front of our Sheykh the Qadi. Then the one who had led him in said: «This man has killed his own wife and chopped her members to eat them». Saying so he put down the burden and presto, it (the burden) was a woman whose members had been chopped in the manner done to a sheep by a butcher to eat it. Our Shaykh the Qadi was horrified and ordered the burial of those members, Then occurred another similar matter another day (again). 'Hosanna to Him who tests His own servants at will!'. The said Amir never ceased suffering for those who were suffering till God lifted the famine and one *sa'* of grain could be had for five *Mahalaq*<sup>74</sup> or for four *Mahalaq*. But the Oromo continued to devastate the region and the Sim region was also pillaged together with that of Shewa, Nagab, Gidaya, Dakar and most parts of the Hargaya countries.<sup>75</sup> The survivors built fortifications and dug trenches;

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<sup>71</sup> This is the first information that appears in these documents regarding the highland Oromo's invasion of the Muslims of Adal. Hence this occurred during Nur ibn Mujahid's emirate; as has been confirmed further by Christian Abyssinian sources (Cf. the *Storia Dei, Oromo*, edited by Guidi, chap. II).

<sup>72</sup> The following story demonstrates how it is about a true anthropophagi and not a rhetorical amplification of the author.

<sup>73</sup> The following narration is missing in Paulitscke's translation (which was based on a mutilated manuscript). It is a new proof that the writer was an ocular witness of his narrated events.

<sup>74</sup> *Mahalaq* used to be a small divisional coin; nowadays the Abyssinians call the *piaster Mahaleq*, that is, the sixteenth part of a *thaler*.

<sup>75</sup> Re Sim see text V a p. 178 note 151. I cannot tell if *Shewa* شوي supposed to be understood as the name of the famous region in northern Ethiopia or instead it eventually regards a homonymous district of Adal. Dakar used to be the famous old capital of Adal mentioned than once in these texts. Nagab, Gidaya and Hargaya were all localities in Adal. They had already been recorded in the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon I (1314-1344) as participants to the Muslim league which was led by Qadi Salih against that Negus: Nagab and Gidaya are, according to

but, while they were living so, they had a second famine which pushed one sa' of grain up to two *Ashrafi* and salt to five *Ashrafi*. Amir Nur died during this famine- may the Almighty God grant him His mercy and forgive him! The cause of his demise was pestilence,<sup>76</sup> three months after his return from a Oromo plunder, in the year 975.<sup>77</sup>

And after him Amir 'Uthman the Abyssinian<sup>78</sup> came to reign, in the aforesaid year. He was the first ever to permit the drinking of alcohol as well as allowing (the taking) of properties from Muslim orphans; he proclaimed disapproved things and impeded the collection of the Fifth<sup>79</sup> and became prey to passions. He neglected religious duties and made libidinous acts lawful and confiscated properties from the orphans left behind by Amir Nur in Jamal ad-Din's custody.<sup>80</sup> But the one who put an end to him with his own property and personality from (damaging) the Muslims in the port of Zaila', the protected one (by God) - and whose fate was spread as far as the ports of the East, was Sherif, the respected and the noble Sayyid Muhammed the son of Sayyid 'Umar ash-Shatiri.<sup>81</sup> The quantity of money Amir 'Uthman laid his hands on was 35 thousand and of each one thousand, fifty were of pure gold. The duration of his reign was two years; and the devotees never ceased - amongst whom the ones

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the Ethiopian chronicler, ruled by one king, while Hargaya (Hargaya) in governed by a governor. We notice how Perruchon has accepted in his text the erroneous word *gedad* from the Chronicle on p. 48 (text) instead of the more correct *geday* which he cites among other different forms which has been confirmed as *gidaya* which he himself had accepted as such in the Chronicle on p. 13 (text). so the *Hargaya* of the same Chronicle, p. 13 (text) is certainly the same region of *Hargaya* p. 51 (text) that is, the one which our Arab documents call *Hargaya*. Cf. hereunder, pp. 226-227.

<sup>76</sup> It is admirable to have this mention of the epidemic of pestilence in Harar in the XVI century for the study of the diffusion of that malady in the south-east of Africa.

<sup>77</sup> 975 *Hegira* corresponds to the period from 8<sup>th</sup> July 1567 - 25<sup>th</sup> June 1568 AD.

<sup>78</sup> This emir 'Uthman the Abyssinian was a recently converted one to Islam and probably this explains the opposition which was immediately organized against him by the old guards of Adal.

<sup>79</sup> Hence he did not pay the Sherifs the parts owed to them from the booty. See below on text IV, p. 169, note 128.

<sup>80</sup> This Jamal ad-Din, about whom we have talked regarding the famine during Emir Nur's time seems to have been the Qadi of Harar, see p. 158.

<sup>81</sup> That means he is a Sherif. I do not think that this passage is clear. See further, text IV 9 p. 168 note 123.

God has endowed with religious rectitude in the foremost line- to reproach the deeds of (Amir 'Uthman) and to prohibit the transgression of the Divine Law; up to when God conceded the Muslims a consolation. Then peace was made between the Oromo and the Muslims (on condition that) the Oromo could come<sup>82</sup> and buy cotton at a fixed price; and they also put their condition (to Amir 'Uthman) that any Oromo taking refuge among Muslims must be returned to them (to the Oromo).<sup>83</sup> So Amir 'Uthman ordered Garad Jibril, who was Amir Nur's son-in-law, to go to the Oromo market,<sup>84</sup> which he did. But when the market was over, he (Garad Jibril) went down, together with his followers who were with him, towards Aussa<sup>85</sup> deploring the deeds of that Emir ('Uthman) for his transgression of the Book of the Highest God (on) the first of the month of *Dhual-Qa'adah* in the Year 976.<sup>86</sup> So he settled in a place called Zagrabar; and, while Garad Jibril was there a woman came to him, (sent to him) by the elders (of Harar); she was a repentant and a returnee to the Islamic religion because she had been a Muslim originally. Now the emir had already made peace with the Oromo as we have said above. So Garad Jibril sent a word to Amir 'Uthman saying: 'A woman has entered the Islamic religion and she was a Muslim originally. If the Oromo demand her return, it would not be lawful to send her back to them, because God has forbidden us to do so - Hosanna to Him the Highest! - with His own words: 'If you have recognized them as believers, do not send them back to the infidels to whom they are neither lawful nor are they lawful to them'.<sup>87</sup> But the Emir

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<sup>82</sup> As we see, the Muslims were quick to attract the Oromo to their own markets so that they may fulfil the necessities of those bedouins for cottony at least.

<sup>83</sup> This clause is very important because it demonstrates how up to then there were fights among Oromo tribes, even during their own great invasion of Ethiopia; in a way that the outlaw Oromo took refuge among Muslims, just as it happened later regarding the Muslims and the Christian of Abyssinia who always found the traditional refuge among Oromo tribes.

<sup>84</sup> Owing to the recent convention the Oromo were admitted to oversee one of the markets.

<sup>85</sup> Aussa, the refuge of rebel Harari Emirs, has the same function which has Harar in this period just as what Zaila' would have later on vis-à-vis the Imamate of Aussa.

<sup>86</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 976 *Hegira* corresponds to 17<sup>th</sup> April 1569 AD.

<sup>87</sup> The Koran, LX, 10.

ordered that she be returned to the Oromo - may the Almighty God belittle them! So Garad Jibril refused to send her back so as not to obey a creature in defiance of the Creator,<sup>88</sup> and thus he left Zagrabar and emigrated to Aussa to safeguard his own religion.<sup>89</sup> He met his brother Garad Ahmed and after leaving him behind there (in Aussa), he went down to Zaila'. His arrival at Zaila' was on the seventeenth of the month of *Dhu-al-Qa'da* in the year 976.<sup>90</sup> Then he left for Aussa once more on the day of Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of the said month<sup>91</sup> and left (another time) for Zaila' with his above-mentioned brother Garad Ahmed on the day of Saturday, the fourth of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.<sup>92</sup> So Amir 'Uthman sent Garad Balaw Muhammed, Sim Garad, to fight Garad Jibril who had joined the son of his brother (Sim Garad's) with him, Garad 'Umar.

So they went down to Zaila', while Amir 'Uthman remained in Aussa - and God inspired love for Garad Jibril in the hearts of all, people and the dignitary, and their invocations for him never ceased day and night. So, when Sim Garad came down, they defeated him and Garad Jibril was killed - may the Highest God be compassionate with him!<sup>93</sup>

The banner (of rebellion) was now in the hands of Sultan 'Talhah the son of 'Abbas, who had been one of the partisans of Garad Jibril, and one of his friends. And together with him his brother Garad Jibril, the son of Amir Nur rebelled; and having defeated Sim Garad and having taken what was left from his army they went to Harar - and the Highest God gave them victory against Garad Muhammed Hargay whom Amir

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<sup>88</sup> For not committing anything against the divine precepts.

<sup>89</sup> These and other types of local dissensions are characteristic and are always apparently attributed to religious causes; so this terminology used by the chronicler reverberates these opinions perfectly *الله مهاجر الدين* or even *قتل شهيدا* as if it really regards a holy war.

<sup>90</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 976 *Hegira* corresponds to 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1569 AD.

<sup>91</sup> The following 4<sup>th</sup> May 1569 means AD. The Garad, therefore, was trying to unify partisans between Aussa and Zaila' before trying to have a coup de main on Harar.

<sup>92</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 976 *Hegira* corresponds to 20<sup>th</sup> May 1566 AD.

<sup>93</sup> Garad Jibril's rebellion, therefore, last a little more than one month, up to this last defeat of his; but certainly the party on whose backing he was depending must have been very strong, if Sultan Talhah was able, after the defeat, to take over the movement victoriously.

'Uthman left behind in Harar. Since Amir 'Uthman was still in Aussa,<sup>94</sup> he neither heard the news of the defeat of his army nor the surrender of his own country Harar. The religious people of Harar agreed to install 'Talha has the reigning sultan; and Amir 'Uthman's army recognized him and then he himself came back. The killing of Garad Jibril occurred on the fifth day of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*<sup>95</sup> and the election of Sultan Talhah on the first of 'Ashura' of the year 977.<sup>96</sup> He wore the *Gamador*<sup>97</sup> and the drums were beaten tellingly in the city of Harar as a token of joy and as a harbinger of a reign by Sultan Talhah the son of Wazir 'Abbas the son of the brother of Imam Ahmed the Conqueror.<sup>98</sup> But during his (Sultan Talhah) reign, he neither set out on a campaign nor a holy war and that was why he was deposed on the seventh day of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 978.<sup>99</sup>

After him Sultan Nasir the son of 'Uthman started his reign on that very day and year; and after reigning for two years he died - may the mercy of God be upon him! - and was buried in the city of Harar.<sup>100</sup>

After him his son Sultan Muhammed the son of Nasir, the son of 'Uthman, the son of Badlay came to reign in the year 980.<sup>101</sup> He set out on

<sup>94</sup> While Talhah was beating the emir's army, the latter was in Aussa with another army. So the opposing party was stronger than the emir's, which never tried to resist, after the take-over of Harar.

<sup>95</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 976 *Hegira* corresponds to 21<sup>st</sup> May 1569 AD.

<sup>96</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Muharram* 977 corresponds to 16<sup>th</sup> June 1569. So Emir 'Uthman reigned for more or less one year.

<sup>97</sup> *Gamador*, a Harari language word, is a sort of head-dress.

<sup>98</sup> Hence 'Talhah was the son of Wazir 'Abbas ibn Abun, who being Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed's nephew, had already been *Bahr Nagash* during the Muslim conquest of Tigray. So the rebellious movement against Emir 'Uthman, therefore, represents a vengeance wreaked by the Gragn family.

<sup>99</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 978 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1571 AD. Hence Sultan Talhah reigned only for two years. Cf. p. 173 note 145.

<sup>100</sup> It is worth noticing that from 'Talhah on these Harari monarchs assume the title of *sultan* instead of that of emir, while hitherto the title sultan was - as we have seen above - used to be nominally reserved for the last descendants of the Walasma'.

<sup>101</sup> 980 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 14<sup>th</sup> May 1572 - 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1573 AD. Therefore, this Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir is the king of Adal and the rival of Negus Malak Sagged about whom the Ethiopian Chronicles make mention.



an expedition against Abyssinia on the day of Thursday, the fourth of the month of *Shawwal*<sup>102</sup> after having left behind his brother Wazir Hamid the son of Sultan Nasir in the city of Harar.

But when the Oromo learnt that the Muslim army was in Abyssinia, they began to devastate the land of Sa'd ad-Din and destroyed one hundred-Muslim villages.<sup>103</sup> There was neither strength nor power except in the belief in God - Hosanna to Him the Highest! - when they reached the city of Harar and besieged the population for the duration of some days. They fought at the gate of Harar so much that corpses were piled up there and then the Oromo went (back). The Wazir (Hamid) was hit (in that battle) by about twenty spears and his trench collapsed, but the Highest God saved him and he was taken into the city of Harar and survived. On Sultan Muhammed b. Nasir's expedition, he met the infidels and a great battle took place between the two parties; and the Almighty God gave him victory over them (the Abyssinians).<sup>104</sup> Thereafter, one of the Muslims called Asma'ad-Din betrayed his own co-religionists and passed to the cursed camp of the infidels.<sup>105</sup> He soon entered and presented himself to the king (of Abyssinia); and God thrust defeat in the hearts of the Muslim army who just dispersed without fighting, and all

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<sup>102</sup> Sultan Muhammed's expedition against Christian Abyssinia started, according to the Abridged Chronicle, in 1576 AD, during the thirteenth year of Negus Malak Saggad's reign; and according to the Chronicle of *Malak Saggad*, in 1577 AD the fourteenth year of the aforesaid Negus' reign. Our document does not indicate here the year of departure of the expedition, which, therefore, should be 983 or 984 *Hegira*. This was the last and the unfortunate Muslim tentative against the Christian Abyssinia (see further on note 107).

<sup>103</sup> The Oromo, who were in a full swing of invasions toward the North, benefited, as we have seen, from the wars waged between the Christians and the Muslims of Ethiopia harmful to both belligerent parties.

<sup>104</sup> There is no any mention about this Christian defeat in the Ethiopian chronicles; but our document now clarifies the interpretation of a certain interesting passage in the chronicle of Malak Saggad, in which it is hinted at a certain withdrawal ordered by the Negus to draw in the Muslim enemy and then at an indecisive battle which preceded Asma' ad-Din's defection [*Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel*, ed. by Conti Rossini, p. 50 (text), p. 58 (translation)]

<sup>105</sup> Asama' ad-Din's defection was not the only one; the Ethiopian chronicle of Malak Saggad rather narrates how, one week after this event, some other eminent figures belonging to the Muslim camp, among whom Sim Garad was the head, seized Sultan Muhammed and delivered him to the Negus.

(the Abyssinians) jumped on them and killed them<sup>106</sup> - may the Almighty God be merciful with them and with the dead Muslims! Later, the land of Sa'd ad-Din was devastated and fell under the hegemony of oppressing stock, namely the Oromo, upon the devotees (the Muslims). God with His favours made arise - He is Mighty and a Sovereign! - a man named Mansur, the son of Muhammed, the son of Ayyub in the month of *Jumad al-Awwal* of the year 983<sup>107</sup> who lived in Harar and fought the Oromo and took one hundred and forty filly horses from the Somalis.<sup>108</sup> And after having then organized about three hundred men, he went down to Zaila' at the end of the sacred month of *Muharram*<sup>109</sup> and left for the country of Aussa with the intention of subduing 'Haygan'<sup>110</sup> Hashim who was left behind there by the aforesaid Sultan Muhammed.<sup>111</sup> He reached Aussa on the second day of the month of *Safar*<sup>112</sup> and attacked Haygan Hashim. He then left straightaway for Janahsir in *Jumad al-Akhirah* in the year 984.<sup>113</sup> But when he reached a place called<sup>114</sup> ... near the country of Aussa, his

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<sup>106</sup> The royal Ethiopian chronicle tells us, instead, that the officials of Sultan Muhammed were, together with him, delivered to the Negus by the rebels after which they were killed on the order given by the leaders of the Christian army.

<sup>107</sup> *Jumad al-Awwal* 983 corresponds to the period 8<sup>th</sup> August - 6<sup>th</sup> September 1575. This will have us to suppose that the date of Sultan Muhammed's departure (see note 102) must be established at 982 *Hegira*, a date which would not correspond to the chronology of the Ethiopian chronicles. However, since the undertaking of this Mansur ibn Muhammed occurred from *Muharram* onwards, it could be assumed that this first date refers to his transfer to Harar and not to the real and proper start of his activities against the Oromo. At any rate, it is admirable to see the unceasing show up of commanders who install themselves at the head of armies against alien enemies or against political rivals during these serious moments. Cf. p. 173 note 1.

<sup>108</sup> The Somali cavalry are always present in these wars, and this demonstrates how horse breeding flourished in Northern Somalia then.

<sup>109</sup> *Muharram* 984 *Hegira* corresponds to the period 31<sup>st</sup> March 1576-29<sup>th</sup> April 1576 AD.

<sup>110</sup> The title *Hégano* or *Hegano* already appears in the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus Zar'a Ya'qob's (ed. Perruchon, p. 15 and p. 101) who reigned from 1434 to 1478 AD. It is Negus Zar'a Ya'qob's attribution regarding the governors of Geber and those of Waj.

<sup>111</sup> Therefore, Sultan Muhammed had left one governor in Harar and another in Aussa. This Mansur ibn Muhammed, who started his undertakings as the defender of Harar against the Oromo, ended up revolting and attacking the governor of Aussa himself.

<sup>112</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> of *Safar* 984 *Hegira* corresponds to 1<sup>st</sup> May 1577 AD.

<sup>113</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 984 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 26<sup>th</sup> August - 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1577 D.

<sup>114</sup> The place-name *إبتريل* is not of an easy vocalization and without other documents.

own companions attacked him.<sup>115</sup>

And then Imam Muhammed Gasa came to reign.<sup>116</sup> He settled in the land of Aussa<sup>117</sup> and he was the first Muslim combatant to settle there: and that was in the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 984<sup>118</sup> and was killed on the day of Friday, the seventh of *Dhu al-Qa'adah* of the year 991; the Oromo killed him.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Hence, we have another rebellion in favour of Gagn Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed's family, just like the one of ten years before which put Sultan Talhah on the throne.

<sup>116</sup> Muhammed Gasa, therefore, was one of Gagn's family; and as a token of the achieved restoration, he assumes the title of Imam once more. He is called Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa in text IV. See p. 173.

<sup>117</sup> Harar, too much exposed to the Oromo coup de main, therefore, loses its position as a capital which it held fast for 58 years (926-984 *Hegira*); and Aussa, being better defensible, becomes the seat of the new Imamate.

<sup>118</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 984 corresponds to the period 26<sup>th</sup> August - 26<sup>th</sup> September 1577.

<sup>119</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 991 *Hegira* corresponds to 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1583 AD.

## § 5 The Variant Histories of Kings

As I have said earlier (text III, note 56), we have a second version of the 'History of Kings', about which I will be giving numerous and different forms as follows:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله اما بعد فهذه نبذة في تاريخ المجاهدين ببلد الحبشة ثبتنا الله واياهم على الجهاد وحنينا واياهم عن الزيغ والعناد وحشرنا واياهم في الرعيد الاول يوم التتادى بحق سيدنا المرسل نور للعباد يقول العبد الفقير الحقير المتعريف بالذنب والتقصير ابو بكر ابن محمد بن حسين بن محمد بن علوي شَنَبَل با علوي غفر الله له ذنوبه وستر عيوبه ورزقه حسن الخاتمة والنظر الى وجهه الكريم في اليوم لا يجزى الله النبي والذين آمنوا معه بحقه امين اللهم امين اول ما ابتدى بتاريخ امير المؤمنين الامير نور بن الوزير مجاهد ابن علي بن عبد الله الضحي سوحه كان اول ولاية الامير نور سنة ستين وتسعمائة وتوفى يوم الجمعة في شهر ربيع الاول من سنة خمس وسبعين وتسعمائة رحمه الله رحمة الابرار امين ولموته كثر بكاء الناس وتاسفهم عليه قريبيهم وبعيدهم وكان ورعا متدينا امرا بالمعروف ونهيا عن المنكر متعففا عن اموال الناس حاملا للاعيا قليل الضجر وكثير الحزم وكانت له رحمه الله السيرة الحسنة التامة في العدل والانصاف خصوصا من نفسه وهو صاحب الفتح الثاني وقاتل ملك الحبشة المكنى باطناف سجد واخرج الخمس واعطاه لاهله الذين ذكرهم الله تعالى في كتابه المبين حيث قال وهو اصدق القائلين واعلموا انما غنمتم من شيء فان لله خمسه وللرسول وكان رحمه الله نظارا على الكافرين رحيم بالمسلمين لا تاخذه بالله لومة لائم فله تعالى ان يرحمه ويسكنه الجنة بحق محمد وتوفى رحمه الله وهو راض على الناس والناس راضون عليه وكان سبب وفاته بالطاعون ودفن في مدينة هرر وتولى بعده الامير عثمان الحبشي

Then the narrative continues from page 152, line 16 to page 155 up to the end with the following variation:

Page 152, lines 18-19

اموال اليتامى التي كان خلاها الامير نور عند السيد صالح جمال الدنيا والدين

Page 152, line 23

وكانت مدة ولايته سنتين وخرج الجراد جبريل قفل جوتا الى زيلع وكان سبب خروجه ان امراه من بنات المشائخ خرجت من عند الارومو في موضع يسمى زجراير وهى مستجيرة بالجراد المذكور من الارومو توبة لدين الاسلام وكانت الارومو أصلحت الامير عثمان ان كل من دخل عند المسلمين من عندهم يردوه اليهم فارسل الجراد جبريل

Then it continues, as on p. 153, line 3. page 153, lines 14-15

فابى الجراد جبريل ان يردھا فقال لا طاعة لمخلوق مع معصية الخالق

Page 153, last line:

وقتل جراد جبريل رحمة الله تعالى ودفن في مكان الشيخ الكبير المكنى باو برخلده رحمة الله تعالى ونفعنا به وكان رحمه الله رجلا زاهدا عالما ورعا لا يخاف في الله لومة لائم وكان على قدم الامير نور وكان غالب كلامه بالقران العظيم ومن يوم نزل من بلده والى ما توفى لم يلبس من الثياب الحرير شيئا واوصى الا يدفنه الا من عند الشريف صالح علوى بن محمد شنبل وكان رحمه الله قوته مدة اقامته بزيلع ما اخترفه لنفسه خاصة من الشريف المذكور فله تعالى ان يرحمه ويغشاه بالرحمة امين اللهم امين وتولى بعده السلطان طلحة ابن الوزير عباس ابن اخى الامام الكبير صاحب الفتح وفى ولايته لم يخرج ...

Page 154, line 14

السلطان محمد بن نصير بن عثمان ابن بدلاي المكنى ببطريق محمد

At the end he adds (on page 155 line 15)

قتله الارومو المسمى بورديه رحمه الله ورحم اموات المسلمين وكان له السيرة الحسنة التامة واجتمع عنده من المجاهدين الذين كانوا في الحبشة وعند الارومو حتى بلغ عدة خيله بستمائة فرسا بخيلهم ومن الرجال الف رجلا ومن البنادق سبعين بندق واطاعته جميع القبائل وكان ملك الحبشة يخاف منه من

شجاعته و علو همته وكانت له العقدة التامة الحسنة في السادة الاشراف لا سيما آل با علوى والمشائخ.

And immediately after, the story of Emir Nur follows afresh:

وكان وفاة من قدس الله رحمه ونور ضريحه العالم العلامة الزاهد العامل امام المسلمين وامير المؤمنين سيدي نور بن الوزير مجاهد رحمه الله رحمة الابرار وكان ذلك يوم الجمعة الخ وتولى بعده امير عثمان يوم الجمعة التي توفى فيها اعنى جمعة موت الامير نور وقت الضحى وكان الامير نور ورعا متدينا الخ وغزى الى بلاد الحبشة فحارب ملكها فقتله وقطع راسه الخ.

Then follows the story of the head of the king which was taken to Adal and the story of the subsequent famine up to the death of Emir Nur as is on page 151 line 12 on page 152, line 15 without any variation. Then proceeds with;<sup>120</sup>

ثم تولى بعده الجراد عثمان وهو رجل صمن عظمه الامير نور فلما تولى من الله بالمسلمين وقع نهب الاروموللغزو ولا يرجع الا خائبا محسودا وكان جراد جبريل صهر الامير نور رجلا صالحا ناكسا ينكر المنكر وكان الامير عثمان منهوما مغرط للمعاصي ومخالف احكام الله تعالى ولم يزل العلماء الخ.

Then the story of peacemaking with the Oromo follows on p. 152 from line 2 d. b to p. 153 line 6; then restarts from line 20 of page 153 and continues to line 9 of the following page. Then, and without mentioning the deposition of Sultan Talhah, it continues by so saying:<sup>121</sup>

ثم تولى السلطان نصير اول ذي الحجة بعد سنتين الا شهر من ولاية سلطان طلحة وهذا في اخر سنة 979 فمات بعد سنتين وخمس اشهر اخر ربيع الاول وتولى ابنه السلطان محمد ثم تولى بعده منصور ثم تولى بعده محمد بن ابراهيم جاسه

<sup>120</sup> Follows as on p. 164, line 10.

<sup>121</sup> Follows as on p. 165, line 10.

Then follow the dates of Fanil's and of Hamalamal's entrance to Harar, as in text No. VI on page 197-198, without any variation.

In the Name of God the Compassionate the Merciful. Praised be God! This is one part of the history of combatants<sup>122</sup> during the Holy war on Abyssinian land, may God preserve us and them in the Holy war and make us and them diverge from injustice and obstinacy and unite us and them as the first group in the Day of Reckoning, according to the justice of the lord of Messengers (Muhammed), the light of Your servants!

Says the poor and humble servant, who admits his own guilt and his negligence, Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed ibn Husayn ibn Muhammed ibn 'Alwi Shanbal, Ba 'Alwi<sup>123</sup> may God forgive his sins, and conceal his defects and grant him a merciful end and the vision of His noble face in that Day when God shall not separate the Prophet and those who believed with him according to His justice! Amen! Oh God, Amen!

I now start with the story of the Prince of Believers<sup>124</sup> Emir Nur the son of Wazir Mujahid ibn 'Ali ibn 'Abdallah ad-Dukhi Sawha.<sup>125</sup> Emir Nur's reign started in the year 960<sup>126</sup> and his death occurred on the day of

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<sup>122</sup> As has been seen, therefore, this second version does not have the title of the 'History of Kings' but the one of the 'History of Combatants in the Holy War', Paulitschke's translation follows this second version; but the Arabic manuscript, which was used by Wahrmund, is incomplete because it lacks the story of famine which followed the death of Negus Glawdewos.

<sup>123</sup> So we have the name of the author of this document; it deals, therefore, with a certain Sherif of Ba 'Alwi descent who spread themselves in all East Africa after having come out of Hadramawt. And this explains the repeated mention, in the same document, of the politics followed by single Harari monarchs regarding Sherifs. of. p. 193 note 231.

<sup>124</sup> The title of Amir *al-Mu'minin* comes also to be given to Nur ibn Mujahid, unlike his own predecessor Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed, qualified as Imam Cf., above, on p. 156.

<sup>125</sup> Wahrmund (in Paulitschke's *Harar*, cit., p. 507) vocalises *Suha*. It could refer to *Nisba*, Nur's original tribe: as a matter of fact the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus Glawdewos considers Nur an indigenous: *Em-Hezba Suhawayman* from the people of Suhawyan in (the Ethiopian plural). Still to be compared with Basset's note: (*Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., [translation], p. 48 note 2). The nowadays oral tradition attributes the Marrehan origin to Nur which means from the famous Somali Marrehan tribe of Darod group. Ad-Duhi appears to be an erroneous variant of as-Suhi.

<sup>126</sup> Text III gives 959 *Hegira* as the start of Nur's reign. See for same text III, p. 156 and n. 62.

Friday in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* of the year 975 - may God bestow on him the compassion bestowed on upright men! Amen. Many grieved his demise and his bereavement caused the wailing of the near and the far. He was indeed a pious devotee and involved the good and forbade the bad. He was respectful of others' properties, the bearer of his own people's burden. Less grudging and a man of *a plomb*. He was - may God's compassion be upon him! - a model of good conduct in life, perfectly just and was adorned with refined qualities, especially spiritual ones. He was the 'The second Conqueror' and the killer of the Abyssinian king nicknamed Atnaf Saggad.<sup>127</sup> He also paid the Fifth<sup>128</sup> by giving it to the people mentioned by the Almighty God in His revealed Book, where He says - and He is more truthful than they say! - «and you must know that from whatsoever you earn as a bounty, one-fifth (of this bounty) shall be God's part as well as His Messenger's».<sup>129</sup> He was - may God's compassion be upon him - vigilant against the infidels and compassionate with the Muslims; nobody complained about him to God. And God will be merciful with him and will have Paradise as his abode according to the justice of Muhammed! He died - may the compassion of God be upon him! - satisfied with the people and the people satisfied with him.

The cause of his death was plague and he was interred in the city of Harar.<sup>130</sup> And after him his slave,<sup>131</sup> Emir 'Uthman the Abyssinian

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<sup>127</sup> See p. 157 note 165.

<sup>128</sup> That is to say out of war bounty he gave one-fifth to the Sherifs as the representatives of the Prophet's family. The record of the outliving of this Koranic partition of a bounty is noteworthy: and furthermore the organisation of Somali Bedouin tribe which used to constitute the main nucleus of Gagn as well as ibn Mujahid armies must have necessarily been not very dissimilar to the Arab ones during the very first Muslim campaigns.

<sup>129</sup> The Koran VIII, 42,

<sup>130</sup> This period is *entirely* missing in the translation of Wahrmond; in my own text III instead only the mention of the burial in Harar is missing because it was clearly said that Nur died of plague (see p. 158 t note 76). However it may be, the particular veneration of Emir Nur ibn Mujahid's tomb in Harar is a subject-matter, a tomb which is situated between Fandala Gate (the nerve-centre of markets) and the street which leads from Ras Makonnen's *Gebbi* to the French Hospital. It is a low and unadorned *Qubba*, surrounded by houses or better by the ruins of houses on all parts; with a small garden where other recent interments are found.



reigned.

Then all the story follows from p. 159. Line 11 up to the end on p. 164 but with the following variations: p. 159. Lines 5-6:

«The properties of the orphans, properties left behind by Emir Nur in the custody of Sayyid Salih, the pride of the world and the religion»<sup>132</sup> p. 159 line 11.

(The duration of his reign was two years; and Garad Jibril Qafil-gota,<sup>133</sup> left for Zaila'. The cause of his departure was that a woman, one of the Sheikh's daughters,<sup>134</sup> came out from the Oromo in a place called Zagra-bar asking the above-mentioned Garad for refuge from the Oromo (having returned) in penitence to the religion of Islam. The Oromo had an agreement with Emir 'Uthman to the effect that anyone of them (the Oromo) among the Muslims must be returned to them (the Oromo). He, therefore, sent word to Garad Jibril saying...».

Page 160 lines 13-14.

«So Garad Jibril refused to send her back saying: There is no obedience of a creature with disobedience of the Creator!»,<sup>135</sup>

Page 160 the last line. «And Garad Jibril was killed - may God's compassion be upon him! - and buried at the great Shaykh's place nicknamed Au Barkhadle<sup>136</sup> - may the Almighty God's mercy be upon him

<sup>131</sup> So Emir 'Uthman was then an Abyssinian (war) slave owned by Nur. See also text III, note 78,

<sup>132</sup> Wahrmond (in Paulitschke's *Harar*, cit., p. 507) translates: «und nahm das Weis Gut weg, welches der Emir Nurel-Mudschahed (SIC!) bei dem Sejjid Salih Deschemal at eddunja Waddin zuruckgelassen hatte, der mit Gut und Blut die Glaubigen im Hafen Zaila vertheidigte, sodass sich der Ruf hiervon bis zum Bab errum und dem hochgeachteten edlen Sejjid Muhammed, Sohn des Sejjid Omar esch-schatiri verbreitete». See also text III, notes 80 and 81. The same Wahrmond translates ذهب ابريزيا (that is to say 'pure gold' with 'Ibrahim gold-Stucke' due to a probable error of his manuscript.

<sup>133</sup> Wahrmond does not mean *Qafil-Gota* 'caravan-head' and does transcribe the title as *Kafal-Huta* by having it followed by an interrogation mark. Cf. p. 179 note 155.

<sup>134</sup> It appears that this woman - the pretext of Garad Jibril's rebellion - was one of a Muslim family in Harar and then, nobody knows how, she became a part of pagan Oromo, from where she later on made a comeback to Islam.

<sup>135</sup> See p. 160, note 88.

<sup>136</sup> Au Barkhadle is a Muslim holy man, whose memory is still well and thriving in the popular Somali Is'haq tradition hitherto. Cf., for example, Kirk, *A Grammar of The Somali Language*, Cambridge 1905, p. 198. Wahrmond translates: «und es wurde Garad Dschibril - dem

and make us learn from him! He was - may God's compassion be upon him! - alien to anything mundane and was savant, pious and never scared of reproaches he imitated in the fulfilment of the will of God; he was the valiant (warrior) of Emir Nur. He was wont to talk while citing the magnificent Koran. From the time he made for Zaila' up to the time of his demise, he never wore anything made of silk, and left a will to his heirs that he should not be buried anywhere except close to Sherif Salih 'Alwi ibn Muhammed Shanbal.<sup>137</sup> He used to -may God's mercy be upon him! - have for food, during his stay in Zaila', (only) what he himself had sewn and collected, above all at the above-mentioned Sherif's.<sup>138</sup> May the Almighty God be compassionate with him and give him clemency! Amen! Oh God, Amen! And then after him Sultan Talhah the son of Wazir 'Abbas, the son of the brother of the great Imam 'the Conqueror' came to reign. But during his (sultan Talhah) reign he never went out...»p. 161 line 20: «Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir ibn 'Uthman ibn Badlay the nicknamed 'Batriq' (the patrician) Muhammed»<sup>139</sup> page 162 line 12: «They had him enter the city of Harar where he lived up to this day of ours».<sup>140</sup>

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*Gott gnädig sei! getodtet und in El-deschenabe (SIC), im Hause des grossen Scheichs Au Barchadlihi begraben».* Is it possible to identify this godly man, who is hitherto venerated by the Somalis and who was already famous in the XVI century (as is demonstrated by our document) as Shaykh Yusuf Barkatlah the ancestor of 'Umar Walasma' the progenitor of the homonymous dynasty (see text I, p. 140 note 6)?

<sup>137</sup> Wahrmond translates: «und vom Tage, da er auszog aus seinem Lande bis zu seinem Tode trug er nie etwas von glatten (haarlosen) Kleiden, und er verfügte dass man ihn nirgends anders begraben soll, als bei dem frommen Edlen Alawi ben Muhammed Schanbali und es war seine Macht während sein Aufenthalts in Zailaihm besonders übertragen von dem erwähnten Edlen». However, this passage is not clear to me. Anyhow, it is clarified, by all these details that Garad Jibril was being backed by the Sherifs in his rebellion against Emir 'Uthman. As a matter of fact, it was probably a movement by the old officer of Gagn against 'Uthman the former Abyssinian slave who reached the emirate as an outsider compared to the old combatants who had fought against the Christian Abyssinia. Cf. text III, Pc 159 note 78.

<sup>138</sup> That is to say at Sherif Salih's.

<sup>139</sup> The nickname *Batriq* could let us assume that this Sultan Muhammed had had served with the auxiliary troops of the Negus. This nickname is missing in Wahrmond's version,

<sup>140</sup> In the remaining part of the story included between this variant and the following one, Wahrmond, though following analogous text if not identical to the one written above (text III), has given some erroneous interpretations:

أحد من المسلمين يقال له اسماء الدين خان بالمجاهدين ودخل الى عند الكفرة أ) Wahrmond translates, «und einer von dem Muslimin Namens Asma eddin Chan (SIC), der bei den Glaubenskämpfern war,

At the end he adds (on p. 164): «he was killed by the Oromo called Wardaya<sup>141</sup> - may God's mercy be upon him and upon the dead Muslims! He had good and perfect conduct in life; those combatants in the Holy war congregated around him, all the ones who were in Abyssinia or among the Oromo, so much so that the number of his horsemen reached six hundred strong with their horses and his infantry one thousand men and the rifle-men were seventy.<sup>142</sup> All tribes submitted themselves to him: the king of Abyssinia himself was afraid of his courage and of the lofty degrees of his intentions. He had a good and perfect bond with the nobility, especially with the Sherifs of Ba 'Alwi descent as well as with the Sheikhs».<sup>143</sup>

And immediately after, Emir Nur's Story Follows afresh:

«And the death of the one whose soul God may sanctify and illuminate his sepulchre, the sapient, the savant, the self-denying and the

*drang unter die Unglaubigen ein.*» Naturally *نخلان* is not the famous title here, which is unknown in Ethiopia; but the verb *betray*.

B) *ونزل الى زيلع* of our text VI has been translated by Wahrmund: «*und ging nachdem Lande Nebdi Zaila*», looks like an error in the manuscript followed by him, for, *Nabdi* is not a name of any locality.

C) *وخرج الى بلد اوسه يريد الضبط على الهيجن هاشم الذى الخ* has been translated by Wahrmund: «*undes zog aus nach dem Lande Ausa Jerid eddabt gegen el-Haidschan Haschim*». While *يريد* *not* a proper name, but simply the imperfect of *اراد* *to want* followed by the verbal noun of the verb *ضبط* (with the article). properly: *to subdue* (in the current usage of this East African Arabic)

D) *وخرج يريد الى جناح سر* has been translated «*und es zog Jerid aus nach dem Lande Dschenâsir*»; while also here *يريد* is not a proper name, but the famous verb; and this phrase is tantamount to (went out straight to Ganahsir).

<sup>141</sup> Wahrmund translates «*und zwar todtete ihn ein Oromo, Namens Burdaje*» by erroneously uniting the preposition *bi* ب with the following name of Wardaya tribe. It regards the famous Oromo tribe of Warra Daya for which refer to *Historia Gentis Oromo*, ed. by Guidi, on Chap. XVII ed., by E. Cerulli, *Le Popolazioni Della Somalia Nella Tradizioni Storica Locale, In Somalia*. I, pp. 51-69. Esteves Pereira's hypothesis (*Chronica De Susenyos Rei De Ethiopia*, Vol. II, Lisbon 1900, pp. 425-426) that the Wardaya (Warra Daya) are to be identified with the Wargeh who exist even today, are not Oromo and less still from the free descent like the Warra Daya, but they are today one of the diverse caste populations scattered in East Africa. Refer to my observations in *Etiopia Occidentale*, Rome 1930, Vol. I. Cf. p. 190 note 204.

<sup>142</sup> As the number of soldiers of this army proves clearly, they made a comeback to the period of bedouins' real and proper warfare and hence the armies of that epoch of the great Muslim invasion were simply substituted by these Bedouin real and proper warfare conducted by these small bunch of raiders.

<sup>143</sup> It is also worth noticing this other hint at the political benevolence toward Sherifs which naturally, our author underlines in a particular manner.

ever-operating, the Imam of Muslims and the prince of believers, my lord Nur the son of Wazir Mujahid - may God grant him the compassion granted to the righteous! - occurred (the death of Emir Nur) on the day of Friday etc.

Then after him Emir 'Uthman came to reign on the day of Friday on which he died, at the morning hour. Emir Nur was pious, religious etc. He led an expedition to the land of Abyssinia and fought that king, killed him and cut off his head etc.». <sup>144</sup>

Then follows the story of the king's head which was taken to Adal and the subsequent famine up to the time of Emir Nur's death as on p. 157 line 1 to the last line on p. 158 without any variation whatsoever. Then proceeds: «And then after him Garad 'Uthman came to reign, the one on whom greatness was thrust by Emir Nur; and as soon as God installed him as the ruler over Muslims, the Oromo depredation occurred. The Oromo hopped about making their raids and never retreated until their objective was fulfilled. It was Garad Jibril, Emir Nur's son-in-law, the pious and the devotee, who used to repudiate illicit matters; while Emir 'Uthman was an insatiable man who quenched his sinful thirst from the cup of debauchery full to the brim, and the transgressor of the Almighty God's precepts. The religious body never ceased...etc.

Then he proceeds with the story of the agreement with the Oromo as on page 159, from line 15 to line 18; then he takes over at line 21 of page 160 and continues till he reaches line 12 of the following page 161. And then, and without making mention of Sultan 'Talhah's deposition, he goes on recounting:

«Then Sultan Nasir came to reign on the first of *Dhu al-Hijjah* after two years and two months less from the investiture of Sultan Talhah, i.e. in the year 979. <sup>145</sup> He (Sultan Nasir) died after two years and five

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<sup>144</sup> The manuscript which had been translated by Wahrmund came to be interrupted at this very point: and hence the story of famine and the subsequent occurrences are totally missing.

<sup>145</sup> The 'History of Kings' has instead the date of 7<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 978 as the beginning of Nasir's reign (refer to p. 161. note 99). The 1<sup>st</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 979 corresponds to 15<sup>th</sup> April 1572, but it is an erroneous date if we also consider the indicated duration of Talha's reign.

months, at the end of *Rabi' al-Awwal*. And his son Sultan Muhammed reigned after him. And then Mansur came to reign. Then Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa came to reign». <sup>146</sup>

Fanil's and Hamalmal's dates of entrance to Harar follow as in text no. VI on p. 198-200 without any variation. <sup>147</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> As a matter of fact the indicated Mansur never reigned. Cf. p. 163 note 107.

<sup>147</sup> It is evident to see the disorder in this manuscript which repeats the story of two subsequent monarchs after Emir Nur two times. At any rate, comparing the same with the preceding story of the *History of Kings*, it does not seem to me that it is uninteresting because it contains some noteworthy variations, amongst which, for example, the one that reveals the name of the author.

## § 6 Excerpts From One of The Chronicles of Aussa

These excerpts have been copied by myself from five unfastened small sheets; the first three contain the fragment A; and the other two one of B and, at the margin, the notes C.

### *a) From The Sacking of Zaila' To The Events of 999 Hegira.*

وكان على خزانه زحل ابن عبد الله الحبشي وكان كاتبه كبير حامد بن ابراهيم الجندي وكان الذي ولاهم في زيلع الجراد لادو ثم عزله الجراد نور الطواشي وهو الذي كان خراب بندر زيلع على يده من طائفة الصومال ومن رجل اخر يسمى عمر دين سيم جراد كان خالف على الامام المذكور وهرب الى الصومال واجابهم وجابهم الى البلد المذكور فلا رحمة ولا تجاوز عنه من الله تعالى وهتك النساء والبنات لاسيما في بيوت المشائخ والاشراف وقدر الله عليهم الخزي والهوان والسلب ورد الجراد لادو الى زيلع وكان بها الى ان توفي الى رحمة الله تعالى وتولى بعد قتل الامام المذكور خزانه قفل جوت زحل قتل الامام يوم السبت 8 قي شهر ذي القعدة الحرام وفي ولاية استولت الارومو في ارض اوسه وحصروا الناس في مدينتين ففره وورابه حتى الناس والمجاهدين ما قدروا ان تخرجوا من فرفره الى مدينة ورايه الا بالليل وضافت الناس الى غاية الضيق حتى بلغت القلوب الحناجر كما قال الكاتب ثم ان اهل جبل ورايه لما تعبوا ارسلوا الى رجل يسمى عباس بن كبير محمد من اهل بالي وخرج اليهم واقاموه وزيرا انه يكون من تحت اخي الامام محمد الشهيد باوسه وكان اخو الامام المذكور في مدينة هرر ارسله اخوه وجعله وزيرا بها ثم ان اهل جبل ورايه لزموا الوزير عباس والجراد عمر سيم جراد وتنصحوا له اهل ورايه والامير زحل في فرفره وعباس في جبل ورايه الخ ولا احد منهم يظفر على صاحبه حتى اظهر الله بينهم السلطان احمد بن ابي بكر جاسة وهو عم الامام الشهيد وخرج الوزير عباس هاربا منها الى بندر زيلع ودخل البندر المذكور قبل الظهر وجلس فيها باقي يومه ونصف الليل وجاء الخبر ان الجراد يوسف وصلى ومعه عدة من الخيل والرجال فخرج من زيلع في تلك الليل الى جهة هرر يريد الى عند اخي الامام الكبير ووصل الى هرر وخرج بالامام محمد ابن ابراهيم اخي الامام الكبير الشهيد الى اوسه وكان وصولهم الى اوسه يوم الثالث في شهر رجب الفرد في السنة المذكورة واستولى على جميع ولايتة اوسه في يوم واحد ولزم عمه السلطان احمد فسبحان من يولى الملك من يشاء وينزع الملك ممن

يشاء ونشر العدل في اول ولايته وفرحت به المسلمون ووصل الخبر الى بندر زيلع المحروسة في اليوم العاشر من شهر رجب الفرد واما الوزير عباس بن محمد فان الامام محمد المذكور امنه على نفسه وماله وعياله ومكنه من الوزارة وجعله فوق العساكر كله وكان كلما رأى الامام من العساكر خياره اعطاه الوزير عباس ثم انه خان بالامام المذكور وغدر ومكر ولزم الامام محمد هو والجراد الله سطر ولمنتى ابراهيم وولده جوهر وهؤلاء اعوانه وتولى الوزير عباس المذكور يوم الاربعاء وهو الثالث عشر في شهر جماد الاخر سنة 993 وارسل بالامام المذكور الى صاحب مدينة هرر وهو الامير سعد الدين وذلك في ليلة الخميس الرابعة في شهر رجب الفرد من السنة المذكورة ثم ان الامام المذكور خرج هاربا من مدينة هرر الى بندر زيلع المحروسة ليلة الجمعة هوى الليلة الاولى من شهر ذي القعدة الحرام ودخل الى زيلع صباحة الربوع وثالث شهر في الشهر المذكور سنة 993 ومعه جمع من الحرله وهم اعوانه وانصاه ولزم الجراد نور الطواشي وكان عباس ولاه زيلع وخالفه انه اذا جاء الامام الى زيلع انه يحزبه ويلزمه فظفر الله سبحانه وتعالى الامام محمد على الجراد نور وطلع معه الى اوسه في يوم الجمعة الخامس عشر في شهر ذي القعدة الحرام ودخل الى بلد اوسه شهر ذي الحجة الحرام وقبض جميع البلاد واطاعه له الخلق في ساعة واحدة فسبحانه من تولى الملك من يشاء وينزع الملك ممن يشاء وهو العليم الخبير وهرب الوزير عباس واصحابه الخ فارسل بهم الى الامام المذكور فقطع ايديهم وارجلهم فهاذا جزاء الخائنين الظالمين ثم انهم بايعوا على الامام المذكور وارادوا قتله فارسل بهم الامام ارض منقطعة من الماء وماتوا عطشانا ثم انه بعد ان استقر في الملك غفر لرعيته وظهرت شوكة الاذاعل وقطعوا الطريق ونهبوا جملة قوافل في طريق اوسه ولم يخرج اليهم احد وضعت الماخذ وقتل نحو من عشرة اكابرهم منهم عمه السلطان احمد بن ابي بكر وزحل ويوسفاي وهيجن هاشم وما اعنيه من قطع يده ورجله وتوفى الامام المذكور في بلد فرفره بارض اوسه ليلة الجمعة وسابع عشرين في جماد الاخر سنة 997 وكان سبب موته سحر في بطنه رحمه الله تعالى ورحم اموات المسلمين وبويع للوزير عباس ابن ابون في اليوم الذي توفى فيه الامام وظهرت الفتن في زمانه وقويت شوكة الارومو خذلهم الله تعالى واستولى على جملة قوافل المسلمين الذين عندهم فقصر الله مدة ولايته فعزل يوم عشرين من شهر ذي الحجة الحرام من السنة المذكورة وتولى بعده الامير احمد دين بن الجراد اسماء الدين في ذلك اليوم وفتح محمد بن وسن سجد صاحب زيلع وكان ربطه عباس ورده الامير احمد دين المذكور الى زيلع ووصلوا المجاهدين السبعة من التجر الى بندر زيلع وكانوا هربوا من الملك تخلو بحر سجد ملك الحبشة وهم اولهم مقدم في الذكر الفارس الهمام والليث الضرغام اورعى سعيد ابن جومارى عثمان والجراد عمر بن وسنى والجراد ابوبكر بن عمر ازان وقفل

جوت محمد نور وبعد وصولهم الى بلد اوسه الى عند الامير احمد دين ابن اسماء الدين خرج بهم الامير المذكور للغزو على الارومو خذلهم الله تعالى وذلك يومالخميس الثالث في شهر ذي القعدة الحرام وكانت اليد في اول مرة للمسلمين وقتلوا من الارومو خلقا كثيرا وهم الارومو ولو وبعد ذلك لم يثبت الامير احمد دين واراد ان يرجع الى بلده اوسه بغير قتال فاتبعوهم الارومو نحو مائة رجال وقتل الاورعى سعيد بن جومارى عثمان والجراد عمر رزقهم الله الشهادة ومات خلق كثير من الظماء وفقد خلق كثير منهم الامير احمد دين المذكور وكتابه كبير حامد بن ابراهيم وقفل جوت بحر طيس والفقهاء العلامة والبحر الفهامة بقية العلماء العلامة الجامع من الشريعة والحقيقة الفقهية كبير حامد ابن عبد الله رحمه الله تعالى ونفعنا به واعاد علينا من بركاته امين وتولى بعده الامير نور بن الجراد عثمان يوم 18 في الشهر المذكور واقام الحق واظهر العدل وابطل الباطل فحسنت سيرته وزهد في الدنيا ورغب في الآخرة ونهى عن المنكر فله دره من رجل رحمه الله تعالى وجزاه عن امة محمد خيرا وعزل الامير نور المذكور يوم الخميس 8 في شهر صفر الخير سنة 999 من الهجرة وتولى في ذلك اليوم والشهر المذكور الامام احمد دين بن عبد السلام وذلك يوم الخميس 8 في شهر صفر الخير سنة 999 واقام في الناس وهو غافل عن الرعية وكان يحب الشهوات وتارك الصلوات ومدمن للخمر وضراب الطبول ومائل الى النساء وهذا بعض حاله الى ان دخل شهر ذي الحجة الحرام وقد خرج عليه الفارس الهمام والليث الضرغام ابو اليتامى ومحب الضعفاء والمساكين فخر الدنيا والدين الامير ابو بكر بن عمر ازان وكان سبب خروجه عليه ان الامام احمد بن عبد سلام امره ان ينزل بالقافلة الى بندر زيلع المحروسة وبعد ان وصل الى جبل ورايه اخذ منه الامام العسكر الذى قد امرهم ان ينزلوا معه ثم طلب منه افراسه فقال الجراد ابو بكر ان افراسي تعبت فقال له الامام ارجع لا تخرج بالقافلة فتعب عليه الامير ابو بكر ولزم جبل ورايه اياما ونزل منه الى بلد فرفره يوم الخميس في شهر ذي الحجة الحرام

It was Khizanah Zuhl (?) ibn 'Abdallah the Abyssinian who had a secretary called Kabir<sup>148</sup> Hamid ibn Ibrahim al-Jindabali;<sup>149</sup> and the one

<sup>148</sup> *Kabir* is a title given to scholars in Muslim religious sciences in the area of Harar. In other African countries (for example: in Somalia), it instead means *master masons*.

<sup>149</sup> The native 'Gindabali' that is, the Gendabalo of Ifât Refer to *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, ed. by Basset, transl., on p. 62 note 2.



who gave them the governorship of Zaila' was Garad Lado.<sup>150</sup> And then Garad Nur the eunuch deposed him. It was under his rule that the sacking of Zaila' occurred by a certain Somali tribe and a certain man called 'Umar din, Sim Garad.<sup>151</sup> It was he ('Umar-din) who had rebelled against the above-mentioned Imam,<sup>152</sup> and escaped by mingling with the Somalis. He struck an agreement and led them<sup>153</sup> into the afore-mentioned town (Zaila') - neither God's compassion nor His forgiveness be accorded to him! Women and girls were raped even these within the houses of Sheikhs and Sherifs; may God make them a target of the same humiliation, shame and plunder. Then Garad Lado returned to Zaila' and remained there till the hour of his death - may the Almighty God be compassionate with

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<sup>150</sup> Garad Lado was the governor of Zaila' during Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir's reign (see text VI). Garad used to be one of the titles in Adal and is being retained by the Somali Dulbahanta and Karanla up to this day (see my *Note Su Alcune Popolazioni Sidiama Dell'abissinia Meridionale*, in RSO, Vol. X, p. 607).

<sup>151</sup> Sim Garad means 'Garad of Sim' who was the head of Sim, a not very identified region yet in the kingdom of Adal.

<sup>152</sup> 'The above-mentioned Imam' indicates the monarch of Adal who should have been mentioned in the preceding part of this Chronicle. I do not think it refers here to Imam Muhammed Gasā, who was killed by the Wardaya Oromo on 7<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 991 *Hegira* (see p. 164 note 119 and p. 172 note 141), while this same fragment of ours talks immediately hereunder about the killing of the Imam which refers to itself of the killing that occurred on a certain day of 8<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* (the year has not been cited). However, and if also with a blank space, this Chronicle of Aussa is the following, added later to text III.

<sup>153</sup> Since ibn Battuta (*Rihla*, Cairo 1322, Vol., I. p. 189) gives Zaila' as a Somali town, while this fragment of ours alludes here the sack of Zaila' by a certain Somali tribe, we ought to admit that, as the Arab-Somali Mogadishu was later pillaged and taken by the Somali Darandolla, Bedouins (see my *Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, Vol. I, Rome 1957, p. 24), so Zaila', though an Arab-Somali town but of Arabized Somali, it also had to defend itself against the Somalis who still remained bedouins, and who as a matter of fact sacked it because of this occasion referred to in our fragment. The rebellious feudal lords' escape from the kingdom of Adal to the Somali Bedouin tribes to beseech a helping hand against their own kings was traditional; just on the other hand they did the same later on when a rebellion occurred among their own subjects. For example Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din took refuge among the Somalis twice, pushed by Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's rebellion (the future conqueror of Abyssinia) against him; see *Histoire De, La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, ed. by Basset, pp. 8,10 (text) and pp. 201 23 (translation). On the other hand the very same Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din had earlier gone, on his turn, to recruit a body of troops among Somali bedouins who would help him later in his own rebellion against Garad Abun so to defeat that prince and win the throne. See *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., on p. 6 (text), pp. 14-15 (translation).

him!.<sup>154</sup>

And after the killing of the above-mentioned Imam Khizana there came Qafil-Gota<sup>155</sup> Zuhl (?) to reign. The Imam was killed on the day of Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah*.<sup>156</sup> The Oromo dominated during his reign<sup>157</sup> in the land of Aussa; and had besieged the people in both towns of Farfara and Waraba,<sup>158</sup> so much so that the people and the Muslim soldiers were not able to get out of Farfara to (go to) Waraba except during the night. The people were so annoyed to the extent of having 'their own hearts reach their own throats', as has been said by the author. And when the people of Waraba were tired, they sent for a certain man called 'Abbas the son of Kabir Muhammed among the people of Bali,<sup>159</sup> who moved towards them. They nominated him Wazir so that he may stay under the command of Imam Muhammed the martyr's brother,<sup>160</sup> in Aussa. The brother of the above mentioned Imam was in the

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<sup>154</sup> That is to say that Garad Lado remained as the governor of Zaila' up to the day of his death, though really did not die at Zaila' but at Aussa, as has been discovered from another document (see p. 198 and note 253).

<sup>155</sup> *Qafil-Gota* the Arabic قافلة the word *Gota* in the sense of *master* (Amharic *Geta*; Tigrigna *Goyta*;; Harari *Gofia*; Guraghe *Goyta*) *caravan-leader*, a title in use in the kingdom of Adal for the dignitaries, under whose leadership, or better under whose guarantees, the caravans proceeded from the internal regions to the coast across the desert lowland. It corresponds to the current title of *Ba'al Gada*, in use on the Tigre-Dankalia frontier. *Qafil-Gota*, with the worsening of the political conditions of the kingdom, started to have military powers; who used to lead a special military corps destined to escort the caravans. This resulted in giving *Qafil-Gota*, who was at the head of well coached and trained troops, a particular political influence; and hence became. in periods of anarchy, a new cause for rebellion against Adal Monarchs or, against the ones of Aussa.

<sup>156</sup> Re the date of birth and the possible identification of this Imam see note 152.

<sup>157</sup> The events mentioned here refer to the last years of the X century *Hegira*; just a little after 991 *Hegira* (1583-1584 AD). Cf. p. 178 note 150. This Oromo pressure against Aussa, therefore, occurred while Negus Malak Saggad was in power in Abyssinia.

<sup>158</sup> I have failed to identify the current sites of these two centres of Aussa, often mentioned in these documents.

<sup>159</sup> Bali (in Ethiopic and Amharic: *Bale*) was, as is known, a Muslim kingdom and the very first to be occupied by the Oromo. Cf. hereunder pp. 329-364.

<sup>160</sup> Imam Muhammed ash-Shaheed *the martyr* is Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasu, killed by the Oromo (see p. 164 note 116). The fact remains that only the descendants of Gasu, (Ahmed ibn Ibrahim), that is to say, the descendants of Gasu, bore the title of Imam; while the monarchs of Adal belonging to another dynasty had the title of *sultan*. Re the title of Imam which Gagn had assumed see *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., p. 13 (text) and pp. 28-29 (translation) and here above on p. 164 note 116.

city of Harar<sup>161</sup> where he had been sent by his brother after having been nominated as Wazir in it (Harar). Then the people of Waraba mountain attacked Wazir 'Abbas and Garad 'Umar, Sim Garad; instead the people of Waraba were loyal to him. Emir Zuhl was at Farfara and 'Abbas was on the Waraba mountain, etc.<sup>162</sup>

Neither of them could defeat his rival till God made appear amongst them the person of Sultan Ahmed ibn Abu Bakr Gasa, the uncle of the martyred Imam.<sup>163</sup> So, Wazir 'Abbas ran away from him (Sultan Ahmed) toward the port of Zaila'. Having entered the above-mentioned port at noon, he remained there for the rest of the day and till the first half of the night; and having received the news that Garad<sup>164</sup> Yusuf had come down with a good number of horse-men and infantry, he left Zaila' during the same night and headed toward Harar after which he made for the brother of the Imam. And after reaching Harar, he left in the company of Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim, the brother of the martyred Imam<sup>165</sup> for Aussa. They reached Aussa on the third day of the holy month of *Rajab* of the above-mentioned year. He (Muhammed ibn Ibrahim) became the master of all the kingdom of Aussa in one single day and attacked his uncle, Sultan Ahmed.<sup>166</sup> Hosanna to Him Who thrusts a kingdom upon

<sup>161</sup> Harar was the capital of Adal from 926 to 984 *Hegira*; so starting from 984 it ruled by a representative of the Imam of Aussa, after the seat of the government was transferred to Aussa by Imam Muhammed Gasa.

<sup>162</sup> The الخ(etc.), which is found at this point in the Arabic text, demonstrates that this fragment is incomplete, because the amanuensis has omitted some parts of the story.

<sup>163</sup> Maybe it is the uncle of Imam Muhammed Gasa who had been killed by the Oromo (Cf. note 160).

<sup>164</sup> Re the title of Garad refer to note 150.

<sup>165</sup> Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim cited here was the brother of the other Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa, his homonymous, regarding whom see the above note 163 and not at all (as the words the great martyred *Imam* might make us assume regarding the same homonym) the brother of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim (the *Gragn* of the Abyssinians), or was he? Cf., note 166. Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, as is known, was killed in a battle fought on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1543 between the Muslims and the Christian Abyssinians who were backed by the Portuguese troops. Hence, he also has - on the Muslim part - the title of *martyr (shaheed)* (see *Chronique De Glawdewos Roi d'Ethiopie*, edited by Conzelman, chap. XIX).

<sup>166</sup> Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr Gasa has been here above called the uncle of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the left-handed and then the cousin (or the brother, see note 165) of Imam Muhammed ibn

whom He wishes and deprives another of a kingdom at will!

Justice was the law of the land at the commencement of his reign and the Muslims cheered him, The news (of Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim's installation,) reached the port of the 'protected Zaila' on the tenth of the only month of *Rajab*.<sup>167</sup> And regarding Wazir 'Abbas ibn Muhammed, the afore-mentioned Imam Muhammed assured him of his own safety as well as that of his properties and his children's, and confirmed him as Wazir and entrusted him with the command of all the army; all those the Imam considered to be the best were put under Wazir 'Abbas's command. But later on he (Wazir 'Abbas) betrayed the above-mentioned Imam, cheated him and plotted against him: they attacked Imam Muhammed: he (Wazir 'Abbas), Garad Allah-satta,<sup>168</sup> Walimanti (?) Ibrahim and the son of Jawhar; these were his allies. And so Wazir 'Abbas reigned starting from the above-mentioned day of Wednesday the thirteenth of the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 993.<sup>169</sup>

Thereafter, he sent the above-mentioned Imam (Muhammed) to the lord of the city of Harar who was Emir Sa'd ad-Din: that occurred on Saturday night, the fourth of the holy month of *Rajab* of the above-mentioned year.<sup>170</sup> The said Imam fled from the city of Harar and made for the 'protected port' of Zaila' on Friday night, the first night of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah*<sup>171</sup> and entered Zaila' on Wednesday

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Ibrahim, about whom we start to talk. It is however noteworthy that, while immediately after the death of Gragn the succession went to persons alien to his own family (starting from Emir Nur ibn Mujahid), thirty years after of his death instead the members of his family seized the throne. Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed actually died in 1543; and Muhammed Gasa, the first Imam from his own dynasty, ascended the throne in 984 (1576-1577 AD).

<sup>167</sup> As we see, this is valid for both Zaila' and Harar though subjected to governors nominated by the Imam of Aussa because they had had a de facto autonomy; and very often used to back up the Imam's rivals.

<sup>168</sup> This passage is very uncertain in my manuscript. However it refers to names rebellious against the Imam and associated with Wazir 'Abbas. Written in this manner, the name Allah Satta would mean *God gave* in Amharic.

<sup>169</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 993 *Hegira* corresponds to 12<sup>th</sup> June 1585 AD. And this is the first certain date of our manuscript.

<sup>170</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 993 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1585 AD.

<sup>171</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 993 *Hegira* corresponds to 25<sup>th</sup> October 1585 AD.

morning, the thirteenth of the said month of the year 993.<sup>172</sup> He was accompanied by a group of Harala,<sup>173</sup> his allies and friends. So he launched an attack against Garad Nur the eunuch<sup>174</sup> who had been left behind by 'Abbas to rule Zaila' with an order that should the Imam ever show up at Zaila, he (Nur) must attack and defeat him.

But God - Hosanna to the Highest!- made Imam Muhammed win against Garad Nur. Thereafter he (Imam Muhammed) took him (Garad Nur as a prisoner) with him to Aussa on the day of Friday, the fifteenth of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah*.<sup>175</sup> He entered the city of Aussa on the first day of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*<sup>176</sup> and became the lord of all the country. The people paid him tribute in less than an hour. Hosanna to Him who thrusts a kingdom upon whom He chooses and deprives a kingdom of whom He wishes at will!

So Wazir 'Abbas fled with his friends, part and parcel, etc.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>172</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 993 *Hegira* corresponds to 6<sup>th</sup> November 1585 AD.

<sup>173</sup> Harala or Harla is a group of Somali-speaking stock which still lives in the south-east of Harar. And according to their own current genealogical traditions they claim to be the descendants of Harla Komba brother of Geri Komba (the progenitor of the Geri tribe) and that of Harti Komba (the progenitor of Mijurtin, Warsangali and Dulbahanta tribes). Therefore, the Harla are, according to the Somali tradition, the descendants of the Somali Darod tribe. Just to begin with, the Chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon mentions a certain Muslim kingdom of Harla [*Histoire Des Guerres De 'Amda Tsyon* edited by Merruchon, p. 48 (text) and p. 148 (translation), and again on p. 110 (text) and 191 (translation)]. Even in *Futuh al-Habashah* there appears a certain tribe called Harla (حرله) as one of the reserves of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, which is nevertheless distinct from the Somali tribes: Cf. *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie* edited by Basset, p. 52 (text), p. 111 (translation). [Also refer to note 1 on the said page 111 translation).

The Harar Oromo legends later claim the *Destruction De La Race Des Arla* (see *Folklore Oromo* by R. P. Azais et R. Chambard, in 'Revue d'Ethnographie et des traditions populaires', are, as they appear to be true, the same Harla people mentioned by *Futuh al-Habashah* (XVI century) and the Harla of today, which makes us assume that this very old population which belongs to the Harari region used to be an independent people, and which later was reduced to being assimilated by the Somali tribe by dint of sad conditions and by the general decadence of Adal countries as well as by shocking ups and downs which coerces us to believe in the Oromo legends so to find a refuge within the genealogy of that people. Cf. my: *Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, cit., Vol. II p. 114 and Vol., III, p. 223.

<sup>174</sup> This Garad Nur, as we have seen above, was the governor of Zaila' during the sack of that town.

<sup>175</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 993 corresponds to 8<sup>th</sup> November 1585 AD.

<sup>176</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 993 corresponds to 24<sup>th</sup> November 1585 AD.

<sup>177</sup> This is another point which my amanuensis skipped to copy a reading passage.

He delivered them to above-mentioned Imam, who had their feet and hands cut because this was the reward given to unjust traitors! They then took an oath of fealty to the said Imam and (thereafter) tried to kill him! So the Imam sent them to a land deprived of water where they perished with thirst. And when (Imam) Muhammed consolidated his own kingdom, he gave amnesty to his subjects. However, the adversary force of 'Athail<sup>178</sup> which waylaid and looted many caravans en route to Aussa started to appear. Nobody went out to meet them and al-Makhad (?) became weakened.

About ten of their notable ones (of Aussa) were killed amongst whom were his own uncle Sultan Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr Zuhl and Yusufay as well as Haygan.<sup>179</sup> Hashim; and what would the (witch-crafted)-eyed one,<sup>180</sup> whose hands and feet had been amputated, have looked like!

And the said Imam died in the town of Farfara in the land of Aussa on the night of Friday the twenty seventh of the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 997.<sup>181</sup> His death occurred due to a witchcraft act in his abdomen-may the Highest God be compassionate with him and with dead Muslims!

And Wazir 'Abbas ibn Abun was elected on the same day of the Imam's death. During his time disagreements started to appear and Oromo prowess became strengthened - may the Almighty God belittle them! They (the Oromo) usurped many Muslim caravans that were within reach.

<sup>178</sup> 'Athail are here called Danakil (who give themselves the name 'Afar). The name 'Athail is probably related to the name of the region of Adal (is it the Arabic plural 'Athail transformed into 'Athail in Dankali pronunciation and hence returned to the Arabic of the local Chronicles and took this new form?). Sure enough, even today, the Somalis of the Harari region designate the neighbouring Dankalis with the name Oda 'Ali, which is an interesting popular etymology (*Oda 'Ali* = Babo 'Ali in Somali) which derives from 'Athail.

<sup>179</sup> *Haygan* is the Arabic transcription of *Hegano*, which was a title given to an Abyssinian governor of Geber and Waj districts (Cf. *Les Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et De Ba'eda Maryam* edited by Perruchon, p. 15). It is remarkable to find here that this title, which the Chronicle of Zar'a Ya'qob attests as already existing in the XV century, was still in use in the Muslim States at the close of XVI century.

<sup>180</sup> Hints at the cruel repression, as mentioned above, practised during the rebellion against Imam Muhammed.

<sup>181</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 997 corresponds to 13<sup>th</sup> May 1589.

So God shortened the duration of his reign, and hence, he was deposed on 20<sup>th</sup> of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the said year.<sup>182</sup>

Then Emir Ahmed-Din the son of Garad Asma'-ad-Din<sup>183</sup> came to reign after him in the very same day and freed Muhammed the son of Wasan Saggad<sup>184</sup> the lord of Zaila' who had been imprisoned by 'Abbas.

The said Emir Ahmed-Din sent him back to Zaila'. Then the seven combatants in the holy war<sup>185</sup> arrived at the port of Zaila' from Tigray; they were fleeing from King Takhlu Bahar Saggad, King of Abyssinia.<sup>186</sup> Among the first, preceding others in our memory, is the mounted rider, the lion of lions and the valiant Awra'i Sa'id ibn Gumari<sup>187</sup>

<sup>182</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 997 corresponds to 30<sup>th</sup> October 1589 AD. As we see, after the death of Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim, the kingdom passes once more to the hands of alien people from Gragn's dynasty.

<sup>183</sup> We note how this new monarch, also himself an alien to Gragn's dynasty, only has the title of *Emir*. A certain Garad Asma' ad-Din had betrayed his sovereign Muhammed ibn Nasir during a battle against Negus Malak Saggad (see p. 162).

<sup>184</sup> Muhammed ibn Wasan Saggad was evidently the son of an Abyssinian, recently converted to Islam. I cannot possibly say, for example, if it refers to the son of the famous Wasan Saggad, one of the most intrepid generals of Negus Lebna Dengel, but who had had a brother named Wanag Jan who converted to Islam and died venerated by Muslims. See *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., p. 92 (text) and p. 164 (translation).

<sup>185</sup> It evidently refers to the followers of Gragn who remained behind in northern Abyssinia, probably on the Eritrean shore, and who had had suffered the following defeat together with the Muslims of Massaua and Turks.

<sup>186</sup> It must be absolutely dubious. In 1590 Negus Malak Saggad was still reigning in Abyssinia. It possibly meant *Azmach* Taklu, one of the most important chiefs during Negus Minas' reign as well as during the first part of Malak Saggad's? (Cf. *Historia Regis Sarsa' Dengel*[Malak Sagaed], edited b. Conti Rossini, p. 6 [text] and p. 8 translation and *passim*). That is why the equivocation could have arisen between the Arabic نجاش and not the Ethiopic ንጉሥ, as usually happens, but only with the Ethiopic ንጉሥ.

<sup>187</sup> This Sa'id ibn Jumari, 'Uthman belonged, therefore, to the Balaw descent which had immigrated from the nowadays Eritrea to the kingdom of Adal. All men belonging to this descent bore the title of *Wara'i* or *Ura'i*. But Basset constantly reads it as *Ura'i*, but still mentioning the vocalisation of *Awra'i* too.

He re-links the title with the Bilen *Aural presume*, but this hypothesis does not seem to be acceptable. We are not running into a total risk if we rather imagine the Arabic root ورع in its sense *being pious*, from which these Abyssinian Muslims could have derived from as a title similar to those *Kabir* or *Shaykh*, Re Basset's hypothesis refer to note 2 on p. 255 in his *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie* (transl.).

*Jumari* as well (maybe read as *Gomari*) sounds like a military title of Adal.

and Garad 'Umar the son of Wasani<sup>188</sup> and Garad Abu Bakr ibn 'Umar Azan<sup>189</sup> and Qafil-Gota Muhammed Nur.

And soon after their arrival in the town of Aussa to meet Emir Ahmed ibn Asma' ad-Din, the above-mentioned Emir set out with them on a raid against the Oromo- may the Almighty God belittle them! This occurred on the day of Thursday, the third of the sacred month of *Du-al-Qa'dah*.<sup>190</sup>

Initially destiny favoured the Muslims to kill a great deal of Oromo - they were Wallo Oromo.<sup>191</sup>

But, thereafter, Emir Ahmed-Din did not persevere and so he chose to go back to the town of Aussa without (a further) battle.

But the Oromo were in hot pursuit with about one hundred infantrymen<sup>192</sup> and Awra'i Sa'id the son of Gumari 'Uthman and Garad 'Umar were killed.

May God concede them martyrdom! A great deal of people died parched and many others were missing; among whom the above-mentioned Emir Ahmed-Din, his secretary Kabir Hamid ibn Ibrahim, Qafil-Gota Bahr-tis (?), and the very gifted Faqih, an ocean of knowledge, the inheritor of the erudite savants, and the scholar in Law and equity, Faqih Kabir Hamid ibn 'Abdallah - may the Almighty God be compassionate with them and make us benefit from him and have His

<sup>188</sup> *Wasani* is certainly read as *Wasane* and is a common name in the Christian Abyssinia. *Wasane*, a certain Abyssinian slave owned by Garad Mahfuz, killed the usurper Ibrahim ibn Ahmed and reigned in Adal for three months during the first twenty five years of the XVI century. Was he the above-mentioned Wasane as Garad 'Umar ibn Wasane's father? Cf. Basset, *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., p. 6 (text) and p. 10 (translation).

<sup>189</sup> This Garad who had immigrated from Tigray later became the ringleader of a rebellion against the monarch of Aussa. See p. 185.

<sup>190</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 998 corresponds to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1590. We have to understand it as 998, (*Hegira*) because, as we have seen above, Emir Ahmed-Din started his reign on 20<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 997 and his successor Emir Nur would reign, as we will be seeing later, as from *Safar* 999.

<sup>191</sup> It is interesting to find out here that Wallo is at war with Aussa: it certainly deals with the famous people of Wallo of Oromo descent, but who are totally semiticized now at least linguistically.

<sup>192</sup> The figure 'one hundred infantrymen' demonstrates how warfare against the Oromo assumed the usual aspect of bedouin-like raids in the lowland of Aussa.



benediction last upon us! Amen.

And after him Emir Nur the son of Garad 'Uthman started his reign on the day of 8<sup>th</sup> of the said month.<sup>193</sup> He made justice reign, applied the law and forbade illicit things. His conduct in life was admirable, his cherish for things mundane was little and wish the afterlife he did: he forbade the disapproved, and what a man he was! - May the Almighty God be compassionate with him and may He compensate the Muslim Community with the best! The afore-mentioned Emir Nur was deposed on the day of Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> of the prosperous month of *Safar* in the year 999 *Hegira*.<sup>194</sup>

And on the very same day and month Imam Ahmed-Din ibn 'Abd as-Salam started his reign and that occurred on the day of Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> of the prosperous month of *Safar* of the year 999.<sup>195</sup> He ruled the people despite himself being careless towards the people. He was dedicated to passions, was neglectful of prayers, a wine-lover, drum-beater and a womaniser: these are but few of his inherent qualities! That rhythm of life continued till the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*<sup>196</sup> when the rebellion of the heroic horseman, the lion of lions, father of the orphans, lever of the weak and the poor and the glory of the world and religion, Emir Abu Bakr 'Umar Azan made his glorious debut. The cause of his rebellion was that Imam ibn 'Abd as-Salam had earlier ordered him to accompany a caravan to the 'protected' town of Zaila'.

And after Abu Bakr reached the Waraba mountain the Imam withdrew the soldiers who had been ordered to go with him. Then he ordered him to hand over his horses; to which orders Garad Abu Bakr answered: «My horses are exhausted!». So the Imam repeated saying: «Go back! You are not to leave with the caravan!» So, Emir Abu Bakr became

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<sup>193</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 998 corresponds to 18<sup>th</sup> September 1590.

<sup>194</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 999 Corresponds to 6<sup>th</sup> December 1590. Hence Emir Nur did not reign but for two and a half months!

<sup>195</sup> See note 194.

<sup>196</sup> The month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* 999 corresponds to the period of 20<sup>th</sup> September 18<sup>th</sup> October 1591.

fed up with him and attacked the Waraba mountain for some days and went down from there to the town of Farfara on the day of Thursday of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.<sup>197</sup>

## NOTES

Now then, this fragment has the essential dates of 13<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 993 and 8<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 999 *Hegira*; hence, it covers the period from 12<sup>th</sup> June 1585 to 6<sup>th</sup> December 1590. During those years Negus Malak Saggad reigned over Christian Abyssinia, and who, during his long reign (1563-1597), made good construction works in the Abyssinian State which were severely tested in fights against Adal in the epochs of the preceding Negus.

Regarding this period there was no document whatsoever found up to this date in the history of Muslim States. As we gather from this document, the transfer of the capital of the state from Harar to Aussa did not improve the conditions of the Muslim State of Adal due to an already spent prowess in the great battles against Christian Abyssinia. The Oromo were bent on renewing their incursions against Aussa and that forced it to remain on the defensive; and meanwhile the Dankali bedouins and the Somalis were actively profiting from the weakness of the State by raiding the caravans or even by sacking Zaila' itself. On the other hand, the Adal Muslims themselves were deeply divided among themselves due to internal troubles; as a matter of fact we see that within the period of 1585-1590 alone, that is to say five years, a good eight monarchs succeeded one another in Aussa:

Emir Zuhl (deposed);

Sultan Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr Gasa (deposed);

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<sup>197</sup> Here comes this first fragment of the story only to be interrupted. We note how this function of a caravan-leader and above all a commander of an armed escort from Aussa to the coast was starting to become so important to the extent of being entrusted to important persons of that mini-state. See above at note 1559 p. 179. Not yet differently from very recent times, and before the construction of Djibouti railway, the Sultan of Aussa, Muhammed 'Anfari used to collect his main income from the transit of caravans between the coast and the Ethiopian highland.

Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim II (deposed);

Emir Abbas ibn Muhammed (12<sup>th</sup> June 1585; deposed on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1585 and then killed);

Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim II (restored to the throne on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1585; died on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1589);

Emir 'Abbas ibn Abun (13<sup>th</sup> May-30<sup>th</sup> October 1589; deposed);

Emir Ahmed-Din ibn Garad Asma'ad-Din (October 1589-September 1590; killed by the Oromo);

Emir Nur ibn Garad 'Uthman (September-December 1590; deposed);

Imam-Ahmed-Din ibn 'Abd as-Salam (December 1590?).

Nevertheless, among these eight monarchs, a good many had to relinquish the throne because of their defeat by the rebels. This is evidence of the very sad conditions of decadence Aussa found itself in during that epoch.

Christian Abyssinia instead was able to re-group so to implement all its forces against the threat of Oromo invasions. But the Muslim Adal, on the contrary, was not able to do the same because its statal organization had very recently superimposed the patrician tribe system. And the bedouin population en masse, once the great chiefs who had led them to victory, disappeared, returned to the instinctive and the never-ending fights which disunite a people from the other, and a tribe from another tribe, which is no longer inhibited or curbed by the personal prestige of a victorious commander.

*b) From 1008 Hegira to the Time of 'Umar-din ibn Adam's Raid on Baso Oromo.*

وتولى الامير عمر دين المديتي الشافعي في مدينة اوسه في شهر شعبان المعظم سنة 8 بعد الالف وتولى بعده الامام عمر بن زياد في شهر جماد الاول سنة 20 بعد الالف وعزل الامام عمر دين بن زياد في نهار الثلث في شهر ذي الحجة الحرام سنة تسع وعشرين بعد الالف وتولى بعده الامام ادرح بن تدروس قي النهار المذكور جعله الله مباركا ويلهمه الله العدل في الرعية بحق محمد واله وتاريخ غزوة الامام ادرح الى الارومو ورداي نهار الثلوث 12 شهر شوال سنة ثلاثين بعد الالف

وقتل اخوه عز الدين نهار الربوع 20 شهر شوال في السنة المذكورة وخرج الجراد احمد دين ابن الجراد ورايه بغي على الامام ادرح نهار الاثنين شهر ذي القعدة في العام المذكور وانتصر عليه الامام ادرح وشرذ الى زيلع وتواجه هو والجراد محمد بن الامام احمد دين وعصى الجراد محمد بن الامام احمد دين على الامام ادرح في زيلع وخرج الجراد محمد الى اوسه من زيلع يريد قتال الامام ادرح نهار الاثنين شهر ذي الحجة اثنين وعشرين في السنة المذكورة ووقع بينهم القتال نهار الربوع واحد في شهر محرم الحرام سنة ستة وثلاثين بعد الالف وقتلوا الامام ادرح والجراد محمد في ذلك اليوم وتولى بعدهم الامام عمر دين ابن الامير احمد دين نهار الخميس 2 شهر محرم سنة ستة وثلاثين بعد الالف وعصى عليه الجراد محمد بن الجراد عيسى في بندر زيلع نهار 22 في شهر رمضان وتولى نهار عيد الفطر في زيلع وتوجه الى اوسه في السنة المذكورة وتواجه هو والامام عمر دين نهار الخميس 7 شهر ذي الحجة سنة سبعة وثلاثين بعد الالف وخلع الامام عمر دين في ذلك اليوم وصحت ولاية الامام محمد بن الجراد عيسى وغزى الامام محمد بن الجراد عيسى الى الارومو ورداية نهار الاثنين 23 شهر ربيع الاول سنة اربعين بعد الالف ووصل بالاعانة والنصر نهار الاثنين شهر ربيع الاول في السنة المذكورة وانتقل الامام محمد بن الجراد عيسى نهار الثلوث 6 في شهر محرم الحرام سنة ثلاثة واربعين بعد الالف وكان مدة ولايته خمس سنين وتولى بعده اخوه الامام ادم بن الجراد عيسى في ذلك اليوم وايضا قتل الامام ادم نهار الثلوث شهر ذي الحجة الحرام سنة سبعة وخميسن بعد الالف في وقت الضحى وكانت الارومو غزوا الى الاذاعل ونهبوا ورجعوا وبعد ذلك وصلت الاذاعل واستعانت بالامام ادم وخرج يتبعهم هو والمآخذ واخوانه بارضهم وبعد ذلك دخل عليهم هو واولاده وعبيده ... واما الخيل جميعهم سلموا وخرج الوزير ابراهيم و ... والجراد سليمان بن الامام محمد وصل في اول ليلة الربوع 12 في الشهر المذكور وتولى بعده في ضحى الربوع شهر ذي الحجة سبع وخمسين بعد الالف الامام ابراهيم بن الجراد عيسى والله تعالى يلهمه العدل في الرعية ويسكن الفتنة وايضا انتقل الامام ابراهيم بن الجراد عيسى في شهر صفر يوم الاثنين وتولى بعده ابن اخ الامام سليمان في الشهر المذكور سنة سبعة وستين بعد الالف وكانت له السيرة الحسنة والعفة التامة في السادة يعنى الاشراف من آل باعلوى والمشائخ وزوج ثلاث من بنات السادة وكان يفعل كل سنة اربع موالد للنبي صعلم حتى انه اكسى فيه جميع من حضر موالده وقتل رحمه الله وهو في صلوة المغرب ليلة سبع وعشرين في رمضان سنة ستة وسبعين بعد الالف وتولى بعده الامام عبد الرحمن بن الامام ادم في الشهر المذكور فله تعالى ان يلهمه العدل في الرعية وانتقل الامام عبد الرحمن بن ادم سنة ثلاث وثمانين بعد الالف وتولى بعده الامام عمر دين بن الامام ادم وكانت له السيرة

الحسنة واجتمع له ما لم يجتمع لغيره من الخيل والغنائم حتى غزى الى الاذاعل  
وعلى ارومو باسو ونهب جميع اولادهم وانتصر في جميع غزواته دائما وذلك  
الارومو في زمانه

Then came the reign of Imam<sup>198</sup> 'Umar-Din al-Madayti, the Shafi'ite, in the city of Aussa in the month of the solemn *Sha'ban* of the year 1008.<sup>199</sup> And then after Imam 'Umar the son of Ziyad came to reign in the month of *Jumad al-Awwal*, of the year 1020;<sup>200</sup> and Imam 'Umar the son of Ziyad was deposed on the day of Tuesday of the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 1029.<sup>201</sup>

And then after him Imam Adrah the son of Tadrus (Theodore)<sup>202</sup>

<sup>198</sup> This new monarch of Aussa has, therefore, the title of Imam afresh, without being though - as it seems to be - a member of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's family (see p. 180 note 166). But with the lapse of time and owing to the isolation of other Muslim centres, the title of Imam met its end in Aussa but still remained as the title of the ruler without any particular meaning whatsoever. It is equally remarkable how in the South, among Somalis (who have changed some of their honorary titles as the kingdom of Adal did, to which subject I would come later), the *hereditary* chief of the grand confederation of the Darandolla has the title of *Iman* has (the Somali pronunciation of Imam) without any other attached value save the one of *sovereign* generically.

<sup>199</sup> The month of *Sha'ban* 1008 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 16<sup>th</sup> February 1600-15<sup>th</sup> March 1600 AD. Since the last date mentioned in the preceding fragment is 8<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 999 *Hegira* (6<sup>th</sup> December 1590 AD), we, therefore, have a gap of nine years between the two fragments: from the epoch of Imam Ahmed-Din ibn 'Abdas-Salam's to the epoch of 'Umar-Din al-Madayti's.

<sup>200</sup> The month of *Jumad al-Awwal* of 1020 *Hegira* corresponds to 12<sup>th</sup> July-10<sup>th</sup> August 1611 AD. Then Negus Susenyos was reigning in Abyssinia (1607-1632 AD) and he was the one who had received the traditional gifts of homage from the king of Adal during the first years of his reign (Cf. *Chronica Di Susenyos Rei De Ethiopia* edited by Esteves Pereira, XXXII). So this reigning king of Adal in 1607 could not be other than Imam 'Umar-Din al-Madayti. Even the Portuguese sources have recorded that during this epoch the capital of Adal was in Aussa (Cf., for example, notes on p. 78, 1. 7. and on p. 374 of volume II (translation) of the cited *Chronica De Susenyos*).

<sup>201</sup> The month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1029 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 28<sup>th</sup> October-5<sup>th</sup> December 1620.

<sup>202</sup> It is rather interesting to learn about this Christian name of Tadrus (Theodore), just as in the preceding fragment regarding Wasan Saggad and Wasane. This demonstrates, in the aftermath of the great combat between the Muslims and the Christians in Ethiopia during the XVI century, who were found in camps of deserters or held as slaves by dint of their being runaways from this religion or the other.

We later notice how such a person like this Tadrus, Imam Adrah's father, due to chronological reasons, cannot be identified with *Goyta* Tadrus ibn Adam, the Somali (Marrehan) and the follower of Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed, mentioned in *Futuh al-Habashah*.

began his reign in the said month - may God bless him and reveal His justice to him toward his people according to the justice of Muhammed and His (the Prophet's) family!<sup>203</sup> And the date of Imam Adrah's expedition against Warday Oromo<sup>204</sup> is the day of Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Shawwal* of the year 1030.<sup>205</sup> And his (Imam) brother 'Izz ad-Din was killed on the day of Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Shawwal* of the said year.<sup>206</sup>

And Garad Ahmed-Din the son of Garad Waraba<sup>207</sup> set out against Imam Adrah on the day of Monday in the month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah* of the said month;<sup>208</sup> but Imam Adrah defeated him and so he ran away to Zaila'.<sup>209</sup> They met (there) he (the rebel Garad Ahmed-Din)<sup>210</sup> and Garad Muhammed the son of Imam Ahmed-Din rebelled against Imam Adrah in Zaila'.<sup>211</sup> Garad Muhammed left Zaila' for Aussa, with the

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<sup>203</sup> This phrase, among other ones we will be coming across regarding other sovereigns, could give an impression that this document ascertains various successive addition and comments more than any single story. At any rate this would render this document more reliable.

<sup>204</sup> The Warday, or better the Warra Daya, were a great Oromo tribe found being even recorded in the Ethiopic *Zenahu La-Oromo* (written during Negus Malak Saggad's reign: 1563-1597) because of their attack against Ras Walda Krestos (*Zenahu La-Oromo*, ed. by Guidi, No. XVII). They also fought against Adal and killed Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa in 991 *Hegira* (25<sup>th</sup> January 1583 - 13<sup>th</sup> January 1584), as has been narrated by text IV. One section of Warday was still holding the area of Italian Somaliland in the XVII century, now occupied by the Rahanwen as well as Beyond Juba; and that is why the Somalis today still designate the Oromo in general with the term Warday (Cf. my quotation *Somalia Rocconto Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, Vol. I, p. 58). Cf. p. 172, note 141.

<sup>205</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to 30<sup>th</sup> August 1621 AD.

<sup>206</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to 7<sup>th</sup> September 1621 AD.

<sup>207</sup> Or probably 'the Garad of Waraba', that is to say, the chief of the town of Waraba in Aussa, often mentioned in these texts.

<sup>208</sup> The month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 17<sup>th</sup> September-16<sup>th</sup> October 1621 AD, but still refer to the following note 213.

<sup>209</sup> So Zaila' was continuously the refuge of rebels fleeing from the Imam of Aussa; and this demonstrates how it still was in a state of semi-independence (see p. 181 note 167).

<sup>210</sup> This Garad Muhammed the son of *Imam* Ahmed-Din must have been Imam Ahmed-Din ibn 'Abd as-Salam's son who came to the throne of Aussa on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1590 AD, as has been narrated by text V A p. 185.

<sup>211</sup> The rebellion which had been started by Garad Ahmed-Din was taken over by Garad Muhammed the son of Imam Ahmed-Din who asserted the legitimate claim of his own father's throne.

intention of fighting Imam Adrah on the day of Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*<sup>212</sup> of the said year.

They fought each other on the day of Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of the sacred month of *Muharram* of the year 1036<sup>213</sup> and Imam Adrah and Garad Muhammed were killed on that day.

And then after them Imam 'Umar-Din the son of Amir Ahmed-Din<sup>214</sup> started his reign on the day of Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> *Muharram* of the Year 1036.<sup>215</sup> And there rebelled against him Garad Muhammed the son of Garad 'Isa in the port of Zaila<sup>216</sup> on 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month of *Ramadan*;<sup>217</sup> and was proclaimed (a sovereign) on the day of Id al-Fitr<sup>218</sup> in Zaila'. He made for Aussa in the said year and so he and Imam 'Umar-Din met on the day

<sup>212</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1030 corresponds to 7<sup>th</sup> November 1621 AD, but still refer to the following note 213.

<sup>213</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Muharram* 1036 *Hegira* corresponds to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1626. Now it seems to be strange that, while Garad Muhammed had already left to fight the Imam on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1621 (see note 212), the battle should take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1625 and that is to say five years later! To begin with, the date of the battle (1036 *Hegira*) is certain because it has been confirmed by the same document. We, therefore, have to accept either that the rebellion of Garad Muhammed lasted effectively for five years (a less probable hypothesis) or the date between the expedition against Warday Oromo (1030 *Hegira*) and the following one regarding Garad Muhammed's rebellion bears another date clearly seconded by figures, and then omitted in our manuscript. So (the day of Monday of the month *Dhu al-Qa'adah* of the said year - the starting date of rebellion against the Imam) would not refer to the year 1030, but to the other date which the manuscript has omitted, and which was probably 1035 *Hegira*, given that the rebellion did start in the month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah*, in which it became intensified with the support of Garad Muhammed in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* and the battle, with the Imam took place on 1<sup>st</sup> *Muharram* 1036, the very certain date. Should we accept this hypothesis, then the chronological correspondences mentioned above in note 208 and 212 have to be changed to read as follows: the start of rebellion: the month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 1035 *Hegira* = 25<sup>th</sup> July 1626 - 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1626 AD; the departure of the rebels from Zaila' to fight against the Imam and the occurrence of the battle between themselves and the Imam, nine days would have, therefore, elapsed (from 14<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1626, which seems to be more likely).

<sup>214</sup> This 'Umar-Din the son of Emir Ahmed-Din was most likely the brother of Garad Muhammed the son of Imam Ahmed-Din, who had rebelled and died together with his adversary, Imam Adrah, in a battle. Hence the rebels would have managed to put one of their own on the throne.

<sup>215</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> *Muharram* 1036 corresponds to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1626.

<sup>216</sup> As we see, Zaila' is always the place which gives rebels a hot head!

<sup>217</sup> The year has not been indicated, but it seems to be referring to 1037 *Hegira*.

<sup>218</sup> *Id al-Fitr* (the first day of *Shawwal*) 1037 *Hegira* corresponds to 4<sup>th</sup> June 1628.

of Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 1037.<sup>219</sup> Imam 'Umar-Din was deposed during that same day and the reign of Imam Muhammed the son of Garad 'Isa became legitimate.

Imam Muhammed the son of Garad 'Isa headed an expedition against Warday Oromo on the day of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 1040<sup>220</sup> and God granted him victory on the day of Monday in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* of the said year.<sup>221</sup> Imam Muhammed the son of Garad 'Isa died on the day of Tuesday on 2<sup>nd</sup> of the sacred month of Muharram of the year 1046<sup>222</sup> and the duration of his reign was five years.

His brother Imam Adam the son of Garad 'Isa started his reign on that (same) day. And once again Imam Adam was killed on the day of Tuesday in the sacred month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 1057 at twilight.<sup>223</sup> The Oromo had already rampaged the 'Athail<sup>224</sup> pillaged them and then they went back; thereafter the 'Athail came and sought the help of Imam Adam.<sup>225</sup> And so he (Imam Adam) set out to follow them, and he (?) and his brothers made a party and reached their land. Thereafter, he,

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<sup>219</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1037 *Hegira* corresponds to 8<sup>th</sup> August 1628.

<sup>220</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1040 *Hegira* corresponds to 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1631.

<sup>221</sup> The said year cannot evidently be 1040 *Hegira*, because the Imam had already set out on an expedition on 23<sup>rd</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1040 (see note 220). Hence, we ought to assume that the date of victory against the Oromo took place in *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1041 *Hegira*, that is the period from 27<sup>th</sup> September-26<sup>th</sup> October 1631. So the expedition against the Oromo must have lasted for two months.

<sup>222</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> *Muharram* 1046 corresponds to 6<sup>th</sup> June 1636. During the reign of Imam Muhammed ibn Garad 'Isa, Negus Fasilidas had started reigning in Christian Abyssinia after having succeeded his father Susenyos in 1632.

<sup>223</sup> The month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 1057 corresponds to the period of 28<sup>th</sup> December 1647-26<sup>th</sup> January 1648.

<sup>224</sup> The Ada'il, i.e., the Danakil (see text V a, note 178).

<sup>225</sup> It is a wonder to see how the Danakil come to beseech the Aussa Imam for help against the Oromo, while up to now in these documents the Danakil always appeared to be bedouin looters and adversaries of the Imam. The necessity of joining hands against the joint Oromo enemy and the isolation in which the Imamate, after having been transferred to Aussa, was progressively finding itself in, used to always give more influence to the Dankali element in the affairs of the State, which later on and up to our own days they became the only population of the State of Aussa, but reduced to a tiny local sultanate.



his children and his slaves assaulted them...<sup>226</sup> and as for the horsemen, all of them were saved unscathed. Wazir Ibrahim and...set out and Garad Suleiman the son of Imam Muhammed arrived early at night on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> of the said month.<sup>227</sup>

And after him (Imam Adam), Imam Muhammed the son of Garad 'Isa came to reign in the morning of Wednesday in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1057<sup>228</sup> - may the Almighty God pave his way to do justice among the people and put an end to conflict! Thereafter, Imam Ibrahim the son of Garad 'Isa died in the month of *Safar* on the day of Monday.<sup>229</sup>

And then the son of his brother, Imam Suleiman came to reign in the afore-said month of the year 1067.<sup>230</sup> He (Imam Suleiman) conducted

<sup>226</sup> Here there is a gap in the manuscript. The document should have told us about Imam Adam's death in a battle against the Oromo.

<sup>227</sup> It seems that we ought to understand that Wazir Ibrahim, the late Imam Adam's brother, had left Aussa with his nephew Garad Sulayman and a body of soldiers to look for the survivors of the unfortunate expedition against the Oromo. 12<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1057 *Hegira* corresponds to 8<sup>th</sup> January 1648.

<sup>228</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1057 *Hegira* (8<sup>th</sup> January 1648), that is to say, the following morning to the night of 12<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah*, during which Wazir Ibrahim turned back to Aussa. According to the Muslim system 12<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* naturally started at dusk on 11<sup>th</sup>.

It is worth noticing that the Emirs of Harar, as has been published in different versions by Paulitschke (*Harar, Forschungsreise Nach Den Somal Und Oromo Ländern*, Leipzig 1888, p. 514), by Basset (*Chronologie Des Rois De Harar*, in Jan, Mars - April 1914) and by others, starts with Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud who is said to have come to the throne on 25<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Awwal* 1057 *Hegira* (28<sup>th</sup> June 1647 AD). This Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud is, therefore, the first Emir of Harar which has rendered itself independent from the Imam of Aussa. We might be surprised to learn that this probable hap of the detachment of Harar from Aussa did not take place on the spur of the moment. It instead seems probable that the continuous decadence of the emirate and the long way away Aussa could have at a long run caused the de facto autonomy of Harar as it did to Zaila', an autonomy which became accentuated when the emir (who was then ruling the city in the name of the Imam) started to try and ascertain the heredity of his position to his own descendant so that to found a small but local dynasty. Therefore, the independence must have been acquired gradually and not by means of a coup d'états and which became definite when the impetuous Oromo invasion separated Aussa from Harar. Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud was not therefore, and most probably the founder of a new State, but rather the first among the governors of Harar who managed to assure the succession of his two sons after him, who actually became the emirs of Harar. For now Cf. hereunder on pp. 365-318.

<sup>229</sup> Deduced from what follows it refers to the month of *Safar* of the year 1067 *Hegira* which corresponds to the period of 19<sup>th</sup> November - 17<sup>th</sup> December 1656 AD.

<sup>230</sup> Imam Sulayman the son of Imam Muhammed ibn Garad 'Isa had already gone away with his uncle Ibrahim ibn Garad against the runaways from the unfortunate expedition attempted by his other uncle Imam Adam ibn Garad 'Isa (see above, note 227).

himself admirably in life and was in perfect harmony with the Nobility, that is, the Sherifs of Ba 'Alwi<sup>231</sup> descent and with the devotees. He married three Sherif daughters and was used to making four *mawlid*s in honour of the Prophet every year - may God's blessings and peace be upon Him! He even had the habit of dressing all those who used to be present in his *mawlid*s. He was killed - may God be compassionate with him - while saying his prayers between dusk and early evening of 26<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1076.<sup>232</sup>

And after him, Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman the son of Imam Adam came to reign<sup>233</sup> in the aforesaid month; may the Almighty God give him the inspiration of justice toward his people! And Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman the son of Adam died in the year 1083.<sup>234</sup>

And then after him Imam 'Umar-Din the son of Imam Adam came to reign.<sup>235</sup> He (Imam 'Umar-Din) had an admirable way of life. He had horsemen and booty all around him more than any other. That enabled

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<sup>231</sup> The Ba 'Alwi Sherifs have their main seat in Hadramawt, but are found being dispersed in all East Africa. A strong nucleus is found in Mogadishu in Eastern Somalia. Cf. my own citation, *Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, Vol. I, pp. 35-36. This passage has us assume that these fragments from the chronicle of Aussa had been compiled by a Sherif belonging to the Ba 'Alwi family just as the preceding *Story of Combatants*. Cf., text IV, p. 168, note 123.

<sup>232</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1076 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1666.

<sup>233</sup> This Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman was, therefore, the cousin of his own predecessor Imam Sulayman. As we see, there in Aussa the descendants of Garad 'Isa had already constituted itself as a dynasty, a dynasty which came to the throne in 1040 *Hegira* starting from Imam Muhammed ibn Garad 'Isa and kept on occupying the throne up to the last monarch mentioned in this fragment.

Let us note the phrase *may the almighty god give him inspiration* etc. which could confirm what I have said in note 203 On p. 190.

<sup>234</sup> 1083 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 29<sup>th</sup> April 1672-17<sup>th</sup> April 1673. During Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Adam's reign in Aussa, Negus Yohannes was the one who had succeeded his father Fasilidas in Abyssinia in 1667.

<sup>235</sup> Imam 'Umar-Din was, therefore, the brother of his predecessor Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman, thus continuing the dynasty of Garad 'Isa's descendants.

him to undertake an expedition, toward 'Athail, against Baso Oromo<sup>236</sup> where he took all their children away from them.<sup>237</sup>

## NOTES

This fragment, therefore, goes to the year 1083 *Hegira*, that is to say, from 1600 to 1673. During this period in Christian Abyssinia, albeit tormented by great internal religious fights vis-à-vis Monophycism and hence, against the Portuguese influence, she was fairly able to resist her foreign enemies under the leadership of her illustrious sovereigns such as Susenyos and Fasilidas who lived in the magnificent capital, Gondar.

Aussa continued to be separated from Christian Abyssinia due to the invasion of the Oromo who positioned themselves between the two enemies. The Muslim monarchs had neither the ability to make use of the opportunity of the Oromo invasion against Ethiopia nor could Muslim propagation win the Oromo spirit, still savage and too attached to their ancestral paganism. In a nutshell, Christian Abyssinia had to resist the Oromo with force of arms for a long time just as the Muslims did - without this common situation having brought neither politically nearer the two great adversaries, vis-à-vis these new invaders!<sup>238</sup>

And only then, did the Christians as well as the Muslims start to assimilate the Oromo who embraced one or other great rival religions.

The internal troubles of Aussa, which had terribly weakened the Imamate during the period referred to by fragment A, seem to continue in a lively manner during this second period to the extent that only a few monarchs died in civil wars. At the end, however, Garad Isa's dynasty

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<sup>236</sup> So the Basso Oromo had, therefore, also invaded the Danakil country; and, just as his own father Imam Adam had done before him see p. 192 note 225), so now Imam 'Umar-Din set out to the aid of the Danakil.

<sup>237</sup> Hence warfare kept on having the character of sheer looting, not only of livestock, but also of slaves. And so Aussa was considered one of the most notorious slave markets in Ethiopia for a long time.

<sup>238</sup> Here this second fragment comes to be interrupted, unfortunately without even indicating the last dates of events referred to.

assured itself, relatively, of a regular succession to the throne. Within 73 years of events referred to in fragment B, a good ten monarchs succeeded one another on the throne of Aussa:

- Imam 'Umar-Din al-Madayti (1600-1611);
- Imam 'Umar ibn Ziyad (1611-1620);
- Imam Adrah ibn Tadrus (1620-1626);
- Imam 'Umar-Din ibn Imam Ahmed-Din (1626-1628);
- Imam Muhammed ibn Garad 'Isa (1628-1636);
- Imam Adam ibn Garad 'Isa (1636-1648);
- Imam Ibrahim ibn Garad 'Isa (1648-1656);
- Imam Sulayman ibn Imam Muhammed (1656-1666);
- Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Imam Adam (1666-1672);
- Imam 'Umar-Din ibn Imam Adam (1672-?).

But the Imamate was now been reduced to Aussa alone because Zaila' and Harar had both virtually rendered themselves independent; hence, it is natural that, having thus been limited, the old kingdom of Adal which later became the Imamate of Aussa began to transfer itself into a small Dankali sultanate where the Danakil would have absolute supremacy after a little while. So while Christian Abyssinia was becoming prey to soldter-like Oromo chiefs who had reduced the successive Negus of Gondar to a purely nominal power, the fate of Muslim Adal was not much different, which for two centuries had arrogated the mission of the diffusion of Islam in Ethiopia, had now to transfer itself into a semi-barbaric State dominated by those bedouin Dankalis whom the Semitic or semiticized Adal aristocracy considered as only a bunch of caravan looters. So, the destiny of the main Ethiopian States was compromised.

#### c. The Volcanic Phenomena In Aussa.

At the margin of the manuscript of the preceding fragment B these two notes can be read:

وتاريخ خروج الدخان في ارض ورايه بجانب البحر الذي هو الملاصق  
شرقية جبل ورايه الذي ساقبه الجن فيه يوم الثلاثاء وقت العصر في شهر رمضان  
خمس عشرة يوم بعد ابتداء الصوم سنة 1017 سبعة عشر بعد الالف في زمان

الامام عمر دين المديتى الشافعي  
 ووقعت زلزلة عظيمة في السنة المذكورة في مدينة اوسه ليلة الاثنين شهر  
 رجب الفرد وقت المغرب ووقع ايضا يوم الخميس وقت الضحى احدى عشر في  
 شهر رجب زلزلة قوية وايضا ليلة الجمعة اثنا عشر في شهر رجب وقت نصف  
 الليل وظهر نار عظيم وله ... اصوات مثل الرعد ... آخر صلوة عصر الجمعة  
 واستمر ... الى نهار الثلوث ثلاثة وعشرين في شهر رجب وقعت زلزلة عظيمة  
 وقت صلوة العصر وهدم جميع بيوت ورايه ... خلق كثير ... نحو خمسين نفر  
 واستمرت الزلزلة نحو ستة اشهر ورفع الله الى عباده .

## I

And the date of smoke coming from the land of Waraba<sup>239</sup> by the side of a lake, which is contiguous to the east of Waraba mountain,<sup>240</sup> and whose (lake) is the drinking-trough of genie,<sup>241</sup> occurred on the day of Tuesday at the hour of 'Asr in the month of *Ramadan*, 15 days after the commencement of fasting, in the year 1017, seventeen after one thousand<sup>242</sup> during the epoch of Imam 'Umar-Din al-Madayti, the Shafi'ite.<sup>243</sup>

## II

In the said year a tremendous earthquake took place in the city of Aussa during the night of Monday in the month of *Rajab*<sup>244</sup> and once more another strong earthquake occurred on the day of Thursday at the hour of the morning on 11<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rajab*; and again on Friday

<sup>239</sup> It, therefore, refers to a volcanic eruption in the centre of Aussa.

<sup>240</sup> Mount Waraba near the homonymous city has already been mentioned in text V A). It, therefore, was a volcano which, with this eruption, was starting to enter its active phase.

<sup>241</sup> This small lake near Waraba volcano was hence of a volcanic origin and so the name of (drinking-trough of genie)) itself will have us imagine volcanic phenomena natives must have seen.

<sup>242</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1017 *Hegira* corresponds to 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1608.

<sup>243</sup> That is to say the first among others mentioned in fragment B).

<sup>244</sup> Unfortunately the year is illegible in my manuscript. But according to a visible sign in red in the manuscript that the note refers to, the year of the start of the reign of Imam 'Umar-Din ibn Ahmed-Din, means 1036 *Hegira*. In such a case, the month of *Rajab* in which the earthquakes erupted and described here, would correspond to the period of 18<sup>th</sup> March - 16<sup>th</sup> April 1627.

night 12<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rajab* at the hour of midnight an astonishing fire appeared<sup>245</sup> which had...sounds like thunder<sup>246</sup> ...at the end of 'Asr prayers of Friday and lasted...for as long as...(the following) Tuesday; and in 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month of *Rajab* a great earthquake took place at the hour of 'Asr prayers and all the houses of Waraba were destroyed...many people...about fifty persons; and the earthquake lasted for about six months<sup>247</sup> and God the Almighty, lifted it from upon His own servants.

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<sup>245</sup> So it was a new eruption of the volcano of Waraba which was accompanied by earthquakes.

<sup>246</sup> The manuscript is illegible but the sense is clear that the great fire which had appeared at night was followed by a sound like the one by a thunder as if it were sonic bangs.

<sup>247</sup> It is tantamount to saying that during those six months that region of Waraba had seismological shocks very often.

## § 7 The Wall of Zaila' And Abyssinian Incursions On Harar

وابتداء درب زيلع المحروسة وذلك يوم الربوع وهو الخامس في شهر صفر الخير وكان ذلك على يد عطية بن محمد القريشي قدمه على البنا الحاكم بها يومئذ وهو الجراد لادو وكان السلطان محمد بن السلطان نصير يومئذ في ارض الحبشة وتوفي الجراد لادو في ارض اوسه بقربة ورايه نهار الجمعة 26 شهر شوال سنة 996 وكان دخول الكافر اللعين فانيل الى بلد هرر على بغتة وقت الظهر يوم الربوع الثالث والعشرين من شهر صفر سنة 957 سبع وخمسين وتسعمائة من الهجرة النبوية صعلم وايضا كان دخول الكافر الملعون حململ لعنه الله تعالى بلد هرر يوم الخميس الحادى والعشرين في شهر جماد الاخر ثم جاء وحارب اليوم الثانى مع السلطان بارض سيدنا هاشم وقت الظهر يوم الجمعة وقتله السلطان قتالا شديدا ثم قتل شهيدا رحمه الله رحمة الابرار واسكنه دار القرار بحق محمد المختار وكان ذلك بتاريخ السادس والستون وتسعمائة من الهجرة النبوية على صاحبها افضل الصلوة والسلام وكان تاريخ مجيء السيدين الشريفين السيد احمد بن الهادى والسيد صالح 12 في شهر شعبان سنة ثلاثين بعد الالف الى مدينة هرر خرجوا منها في يوم السبت في شهر ربيع الاول واقاموا في هرر سبعة اشهر وامير صبر الدين تاريخه 1034 اربع وثلاثين بعد الالف .

And (the building of) the wall<sup>248</sup> of the protected Zaila' started and that took place on the day of Wednesday, the fifth of the prosperous month of *Safar*.<sup>249</sup>

That was by the hand of 'Atiya ibn Muhammed the Koreishite,<sup>250</sup> who had been entrusted with the erection (of the wall) by the governor of

<sup>248</sup> The word *درب* has been used here as is used in Arabic for the East African coast in general in the sense of a «boundary wall». Carrying the same sense with it, this word has passed on to the Somali *Derbi*.

<sup>249</sup> The starting year of these works has not been indicated; but still refer to the following note 252.

<sup>250</sup> So the job was run by an Arab. It was perfectly natural that these Muslim mini-states in East Africa resorted to Arab technicians for their constructions. Even today, among other things, Yemenite bricklayers are still being looked for everywhere in Ethiopia.

it (Zaila') in that period, who was Garad Lado.<sup>251</sup> Sultan Muhammed the son of Sultan Nasir was in Abyssinia then.<sup>252</sup> Garad Lado died in the country of Aussa in the village of Waraba on the day of Friday 26<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Shawwal* of the year 996.<sup>253</sup> And the entrance of the cursed infidel Fanil<sup>254</sup> to the city of Harar, through a surprise attack,<sup>255</sup> took place in the afternoon on the day of Wednesday the twenty third of the month of *Safar* of the Year 957,<sup>256</sup> nine hundred and fifty seven *Hegira* of the

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<sup>251</sup> Garad Lado was the governor of Zaila' during the epoch of Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir as well as after the sack of Zaila' (see pp. 178-179 and notes 150, 154).

<sup>252</sup> The start of the erection of the wall of Zaila', therefore, took place during the unfortunate expedition of Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir against Negus Malak Saggad, that is, during 1572-1577 AD approximately (see text VI).

<sup>253</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* 996 *Hegira* corresponds to 18<sup>th</sup> September 1588 AD Text V a declares that Garad Lado remained as the governor of Zaila' till the time of his death. Now then, while Garad Lado had died in 996 *Hegira* according to this document, (text V a) just mentions that, during the brief reign of the usurper Emir 'Abbas ibn Muhammed in 993 *Hegira*, Garad Nur the eunuch, became the governor of Zaila' once more as an appointee of Emir 'Abbass. So is it as well to understand that Garad Nur was the governor of Zaila' only during the ephemeral reign of the usurper and that Garad Lado took charge after the restoration of the legitimate Imam Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa to the throne?

<sup>254</sup> Fanil, that is Fanu'el, was *Neguis* Glawdewos' lieutenant. He was the one - most likely - who had been bent on an expedition against the so-called infidel Muslims during the ninth year of Glawdewos' reign. The expedition was successful, however, it appears from this Muslim document that Fanu'el did successfully penetrate even Harar itself, an event not mentioned in the story of the Ethiopian chronicle of Glawdewos regarding this expedition (*Chronique De Glawdewos*, cit., (XXXV)).

<sup>255</sup> So there was another lucky incursion than one single and orderly conquest on the fortress of Harar, which has really been confirmed by the general character of the expedition, as appears in the narration of the Ethiopian chronicler.

<sup>256</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 957 *Hegira* corresponds to 13<sup>th</sup> March 1550 AD. Now, and during his tenth year of reign, Glawdewos personally commanded another expedition into the Muslim countries of Adal so to harvest the results achieved by Fanu'el who had ended his expedition - it seems in the previous year. The tenth year of Glawdewos' reign started on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1549 and, therefore, the date which our Muslim document fixes for the Christian incursion in Harar, would be included in the tenth and not in the ninth year of Glawdewos and, therefore, should attribute the incursion not to Fanu'el but to Glawdewos himself. But the explicit story by the Muslim writer renders this farfetched, because among other things he would not have missed mentioning the Negus if he really had led the expedition personally. Anyhow, and according to the Ethiopian chronicler, being very vaguely informed about the geography of the Muslim States, if this incursion in Harar (then the capital of Adal for a few years and the seat of the emir who had a nominal power only compared to the power enjoyed by Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim the Left-handed) had a mediocre importance, the events would have been worthy of mention by the Harari chronicler; and, therefore, the date of the Muslim writer regarding this case seems to be reliable.



Prophet - may God's blessing and peace be upon Him!

And the entrance of the cursed infidel Hamalmal<sup>257</sup> - may Almighty God's nemesis come upon him! - to the city of Harar<sup>258</sup> was on the day of Thursday, the twenty first of the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah*.<sup>259</sup> Then he came and fought on the second day against the Sultan<sup>260</sup> in the land of our lord Hashim<sup>261</sup> at midday on the day of Friday and the Sultan did give him great battle. And then he (the sultan) was killed a martyr - may God give him the compassion given to the just and have him sojourn in the abode of rest for the sake of the Chosen Prophet! This took place in

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We are before one among other frequent chronological divergencies between Christian Ethiopian documents and the Muslim ones, or are we instead expected to assume that, during Glawdewos' expedition in 1550, Fanu'el was in fact leading a column of troops once more and the seizure of Harar is referring to this particular expedition and not to the ninth year? We, however, notice the mention of Fanu'el's death, though without an exact date, in the Ethiopian Chronicle immediately after the story came up pertaining to the events of the ninth year (*Chronique De Glawdewos*, cit., XXXV).

The *Cronaca Abbreviata*, in its turn, talks about an expedition which had been led by Glawdewos against Adal personally during his last reign and not during the ninth (See *Cronaca Abbreviata*, translated by Beguinot, pages 30-31).

<sup>257</sup> It is probable that this 'Hamalmal' is the son of Romana Warq the daughter of Negus Na'od. So Hamalmal was, therefore, the cousin of Negus Glawdewos and during the first ten years of his reign, his nephew Malak Saggad was the ringleader of the rebellious party: he died in November 1564 AD, (see *Cronaca Abbreviata*, translated by Beguinot, p. 35; and the *Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel (Malak Saggad)*, edited by Conti Rossini, chapter I - III). This undertaking of his against Harar does not appear in the Ethiopian chronicles.

<sup>258</sup> So Harar was seized twice by the Christian Abyssinians during XVI century: and this event has also been mentioned by a local Harari legend, about which I will be making a mention elsewhere.

<sup>259</sup> The year mentioned after is 966 *Hegira*. 21<sup>st</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 966 *Hegira* corresponds to 31<sup>st</sup> March 1559.

<sup>260</sup> In 966 *Hegira* Emir Nur ibn Mujahid was reigning in Adal, and who, just in that very year, had defeated and killed Negus Glawdewos of Abyssinia. Evidently it is not this Nur ibn Mujahid referred to as the *Sultan* in this document. We find out in *Futuh al-Habashah* that Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, the Gragn, though victorious in his rebellion against Sultan Abu Bakr of Adal, retained the reigning dynasty on the throne of Adal by giving the title (purely nominal) of *sultan* to the brother of the killed Abu Bakr, meanwhile retaining the title of Imam and all other effective powers of Adal to himself; see *Histoire De La Conquete De L'Abyssinie*, cit., pp. 15-16 (text)iv p. 33 (translation) and p. III (introduction). Our document demonstrates that still in 966 *Hegira*, during the first years of the emirate of Nur ibn Mujahid, the legitimate sultan used to be kept in Harar, though this one having certainly had a much more inferior position than that of Emir Nur's. Cf. my own note in text II further, p. 150 note 55 and here above on p. 117,

<sup>261</sup> I was not able to identify this *ارض سيدنا هاشم* which should have been in the immediate vicinity of Harar.

the year 966<sup>262</sup> *Hegira* of the Prophet - may the blessings and peace of God be upon Him! And the date of the arrival of the two Sayyids, of the two Sherifs, Sayyid Ahmed ibn al-Hadi and Sayyid Salih<sup>263</sup> was 12<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Sha'ban* of the year 1030<sup>264</sup> in the city of Harar and the date of their departure from it (the city) was in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal*<sup>265</sup> after having stayed in Harar for six months. And the date of Amir Sabr ad-Din is the year 1034 one thousand and thirty four.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Two marginal footnotes in the manuscripts to which Paulitschke gives a translation in his volume *Harar, Forschungsreise Ise nach den Somal und Oromo Landern Oest Afrika*, mention this second Abyssinian invasion of Harar (p. 513 and p. 515 of Vol., cit.). Both footnotes confirm the date of *Jumad al-Akhirah* 966 *Hegira*, «still seven nights less for the end of that month», that is, 21<sup>st</sup> day. Paulitschke's manuscript gives the name Habib to the sultan of Harar, and, according to Wahrmund's translation, fixes the date of the battle in which the Sultan himself was killed at 29<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 967 *Hegira*, that is to say, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1559 AD, eight months before the second Abyssinian invasion of Harar.

In one of the two Paulitschke's marginal footnotes the death of the Sultan of Harar is attributed to Fanu'el; and this will lead us into believing that there must be a mistake: in the sense that 23<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 957 (and not 967) is just the date of the first Abyssinian invasion of Harar led by just Fanu'el himself, which the manuscript, of which Paulitschke presents a translation, does not make a mention of the first invasion of Fanu'el but attributes the date to this second one, which was instead led by Hamalmal.

Moreover, the translator of the Arabic manuscript for Paulitschke's did not read well the name حَمَلَمَل (Hamalmal; better still ሐመልማል; in fact in the first marginal note he translates it as *Oromo* and in the second as (*Hamalmal*; or *Gaglal*). This error by Wahrmund has of course made Paulitschke attribute the seizure of Harar to the Oromo and not to the Abyssinian Christians and even talks about the *Chief Oromo Fanil*, who is instead Fanu'el, Negus Glawdewos' Abyssinian general.

<sup>263</sup> It is about those two and their visit to Harar that the following text No. VII is referring to. It is remarkable how this document looks like a piece of a catalogue for Harari history, probably added later on hearing a brief account about the wall of Zaila'.

<sup>264</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1621.

<sup>265</sup> Probably refers to the death date of Emir Sabr ad-Din ibn Adam's who had received the two Sherifs in Harar (see the following text on p. 202 note 268).

<sup>266</sup> 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to 14<sup>th</sup> October 1624-2<sup>nd</sup> October 1625.

## § 8 An Oromo Raid On Harar In 1073 Hegira

A marginal note in the manuscript of, text V A, I copied, states:

وكان وقعة الارومو الذي يسمى بالامو في زمان ولايتة امير علي في  
باب اسماء الدين يوم الاثنين وقت العصر السابع عشر من شهر الله المحرم سنت  
1073 وقتل خلقا كثيرا منهم ولده صبر الدين بن الامير علي رحمه الله تعالى امين

And there was a fight against the Oromo called Illamo<sup>267</sup> during the epoch of Emir 'Ali<sup>268</sup> at the Gate of Asma' ad-Din<sup>269</sup> on the day of Monday at the hour of 'Asr 17<sup>th</sup> of the month of God *Muharram* in the year 1073<sup>270</sup> and a great deal of people were killed among whom his own son Sabr ad-Din the son of Emir 'Ali - may the Almighty God be compassionate with him! Amen.

### NOTES

Hitherto, this is the only document to be had on the reign of Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud, the first emir of an independent Harar after its secession from Aussa. Cf. p. 192-193, note 228. The battles against the Oromo, therefore, continued to be severe and harsh to the extent of reaching the gates of Harar itself. Emir 'Ali died just two months after the incursion which this document is talking about, according to the published list of Basset (in January, March-April 1914). Cf. hereunder on p. 372-373.

<sup>267</sup> I am at a loss what to say if this name refers to an Oromo fraction and of which descent.

<sup>268</sup> It refers to Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud who came to the throne in 1057 *Hegira* (1647-1648 AD), according to Basset's list. Cf. hereunder on p. 365.

<sup>269</sup> I have not been able to identify this old gate of Harar. As is known, Harar is surrounded by a wall with gates that open and have their names changed twice: first, at the time of the Egyptian occupation and then at the time of the Abyssinian conquest; therefore, it is not easy to identify the old local names anymore.

<sup>270</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1073 *Hegira* corresponds to 1<sup>st</sup> September 1662 AD.

## § 9 The Visit of The Two Sherifs To Harar In 1030 Hegira

تذكرة مباركة من جهة الشريفين الذين جاءا من مكة الى بلد هرر في ولاية امير صبر الدين بن ادم احدهما شيخ كبير يسمى سيد احمد بن الهادي مسكنه في مدينة النبي صعلم وهو جليل القدر والكرامة واهل العناية وهو حسيني وعمره طويل والثاني يسمى السيد صالح وهو حسيني ابن اخيه للسيد الكبير وهو صغير السن وكبير العلم والعمل والتقوى والكرامة والعناية والمكاشفة في الظاهر والباطن وعمره خمس وعشرين سنة وهذان السيدان جاءا برسالة سيد المرسلين وقالوا ان رسول الله صعلم امرنا الخروج الى بر سعد الدين يسمى هرر وفيه قبران وصاحب القبر الاول يسمى شيخ سعد والثاني يسمى شيخ صالح وهذان القبران في موضع واحد وهو في موضع قبر الامير نور بن الوزير مجاهد في موضع راسه وقال جدنا رسول الله صعلم اطلعوا الى بلد هرر واصلحوا قبورهم وهم كانوا في الطريق الذي يطؤه الناس والبهائم ويطرح الرمد والزبل وقد كانوا خرجوا في زمان هارون الرشيد للجهاد في بر سعد الدين مع اصحابهم ولم يعرف اهل البلد قبورهم وان هذين الشيخين يعني الشيخ سعد والشيخ صالح قالوا لسيد المرسلين خرجنا الى عندك من موضع المزبلة والرماد ويطؤنا الناس والبهائم ولاجل هذا ارسلنا جدنا الرسول صعلم وان هذين السيدين شاروا موضع هذين القبرين لاهل البلد وامر الامير صبر الدين بن ادم لاصلاح هذين القبرين وان الامير صبر الدين كرمهما السيدين باحسن الكرامة الى ست اشهر وجاء في شهر شعبان وخرجا في شهر ربيع الاول الذي مضيت منه سبعة عشر يوم في سنة ثلاثين بعد الالف من الهجرة وان السيدين دعا الامير صبر الدين وهو اعطاهما الزاد والكسوة ثلاثة جمل مع جمل الزاد وخرجا في طريق زيلع وان السيدين قد تخرجان في باب الفتح في ناحية الغرب ويجلسان للتفريح فيه وجعل الناس بعده هذا الموضع مثل الرباط وسماه مشهد الشيخين الشريفين وفيه كثر الاحجار وصار الموضع مشهد يزوره الناس لجمع حوائجهم

A blessed writing regarding the two Sherifs who came from Mecca and arrived in the city of Harar<sup>271</sup> during the reign of Amir Sabr

<sup>271</sup> This document demonstrates how, besides Sherifs (mainly Ba 'Alwis) residing in the country, as well as in Harar, visits paid by the Sherifs coming from Arabia in a round of alms-collecting were frequent.

ad-Din the son of Adam.<sup>272</sup> One of them was Shaykh and an elder called Sayyid Ahmed ibn-Hadi whose living place was the city of the Prophet (Medina) - may the blessings and peace of God be upon Him! He was revered for his dignity and nobility, providence, Hussaynite descent and mature age. The second was called Sayyid Salih, a Hussaynite too, and the son of the brother of (the aforesaid) elderly Sayyid.

Age-wise he was young but great in knowledge, deeds, fear of the Lord, pioussness, providence and in revelation of apparent and non-apparent matters; his age was twenty five. These two Sherifs came in response to a message of the Lord of Messengers (Muhammed) and said: The Messenger of God - may God's blessing and peace be upon Him! has ordered us to leave for the land of Sa'd ad-Din<sup>273</sup> called Harar; because there are two tombs in it. One of the buried in these two tombs is called Shaykh Sa'd and the other is called Shaykh Salih,<sup>274</sup> and these two tombs are found in one and only place, that is at the burial place of Amir Nur the son of Wazir Mujahid,<sup>275</sup> where his (Amir Nur) head lies. And our

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<sup>272</sup> This *Emir* Sabr ad-Din ibn Adam, the Emir of Harar in 1030 *Hegira* and who died in 1034 (see text Vol. 19 p. 201 note 256), therefore, lived during Imam Adrah ibn Tadrus' reign (see text V b) in Aussa. Since Harar was still depending on Aussa, we are to hold that Sabr ad-Din must have ruled Harar as the proxy of the Imam. But the details of this document themselves regarding the welcome accorded to the Sherifs demonstrate how the Emir of Harar was always bent on gaining the hue of an independent prince; and the hypothesis expressed by myself in note 228 on p. 192 would, therefore, remain basically confirmed.

<sup>273</sup> Re the name of the land of 'Sa'ad ad-Din' being applied to the region of Adal after the name of Emir Sa'd ad-Din of the Walasma' family, see text I p. 143 note 20. Here this name is being particularly referring to the region of Harar which easily explains this 'writing' having been by a Harari hand.

<sup>274</sup> I am not sure if this Shaykh Salih, who is with Shaykh Sa'd, had fought in the holy war against the infidels in the kingdom of Adal at a very early date (this must explain the legendary hint at Harun ar-Rashid) and identified with Shaykh Salih who was the leading spirit for the defence of Adal against Negus 'Amda Tsyon I's expedition (who reigned from 1314-1344). The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon [edited by Perruchon, p. 48 (text) and p. 147 (translation) states about him: *Be'si Za-Semu Seleh* (the variant: *Saleh* which Perruchon gives as a note and which is certainly correct!) *Wa-Simatu Qazi Amsala Liqa Pappasat* «aman whose name [was] Salih and whose position was the one of a Qadi, an equivalent to a metropolitan», is a characteristic explanation by the Christian chronicler.

<sup>275</sup> The tomb of Emir Nur ibn Mujahid is still to be found today in Harar in the middle of native houses up on the hill between Bab al-Futuh (Cf. note 278) en route to the French Hospital and the houses of Emir 'Abdullahi. Cf. p. 169 note 130. His tomb is an object for veneration and there

ancestor, the Messenger of God - may God's blessings and peace be upon Him! - said to us «Go to the city of Harar and repair their tombs which are found on a road<sup>276</sup> frequented by people and animals and where ash and rubbish are dumped». And so they<sup>277</sup> (the two Shaykhs, Sa'd and Salih) left during the epoch of Harun ar-Rashid<sup>278</sup> for the holy war in the land of Sa'd ad-Din and were accompanied by their followers; but the inhabitants of the city (of Harar) did not know the whereabouts of their tombs. And so the two Shaykhs, namely Shaykh Sa'd and Shaykh Salih, said to the Lord of Messengers (Muhammed): «Remove us from this place of rubbish and ash and take us unto thee; we are being trodden by people and animals!». That is why our ancestor the Messenger has sent us - may the blessing and peace of God be upon Him!

These two Sherifs showed the people of the city the whereabouts of the two tombs. So Amir Sabr ad-Din the son of Adam ordered these two tombs repaired.<sup>279</sup> Amir Sabr ad-Din bestowed lavish honours on these two Sherifs for six months:<sup>280</sup> they came in the month of *Sha'ban* and left in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal*, after seventeen days elapsed of the aforesaid month, in the year 1030 *Hegira*.<sup>281</sup> The two Sherifs blessed Amir Sabr ad-Din who furnished them with supplies to last during their trip as well as with dresses: (in all) three camels in addition to another one

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still is a custodian who points out the place in which - in a lower place – the sepulchre of Shaykh Salih is located.

<sup>276</sup> As a matter of fact, as I have said, the *Qubba* of Emir Nur ibn Mujahid is found being surrounded by native houses all around; and the small narrow lane passes through the enclosure. Nevertheless, it is very probable that the topography of this quarter of Harar must have undergone a great deal of change from XVII century to this day of ours.

<sup>277</sup> That is to say the two Shaykhs, Salih and Sa'd.

<sup>278</sup> See here above, note 270.

<sup>279</sup> Text No. VI

<sup>280</sup> According to the preceding text No. VI, the Sherifs stayed in Harar for seven months and not six; as a matter of fact the difference is more apparent than real because both documents say that the Sherifs came in the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* and left in the month of *Sha'ban*.

<sup>281</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1030 *Hegira* corresponds to 9<sup>th</sup> February AD. It must evidently be an error because text No. VI gives us the date of Sherifs' arrival to have occurred on 12<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1030 *Hegira* (= 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1621 AD). Hence the date of the Sherifs' departure ought to be fixed at on 17<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1031 *Hegira* (= 30<sup>th</sup> January 1622 AD); unless the date of their arrival had to be postponed to 12<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1029 *Hegira* (= 13<sup>th</sup> July 1620).

loaded with supplies. They set out for Zaila'. And since the two Sherifs habitually left by the Gate of Conquests<sup>282</sup> on the western side and sat there to rest, people later began to make a rite of the same habit and, therefore, called it «the Sacred Place of the Two Shaykh Sherifs»<sup>283</sup> (there are a great deal of stones there) and that venerated site was where pilgrims went for all types of necessities.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> That is Bab al-Futuh which the Abyssinians now call *Fallana Bar* and the Somalis name: *Fandala*. See p. 169 note 30.

<sup>283</sup> A location which is still being venerated today.

<sup>284</sup> We can, therefore, see what type of a veneration the Hararis used to have then for the Sherifs: a veneration which had contributed for the benefit of the East African Arabs all the time.

## § 10 The Nomination of The Qadi of Harar

A certain marginal note of the manuscript, on text IV, I have copied states:

ومات قاضي القضاة ... عثمان 2 شهر شوال من شهور السنة ثمانين  
وتسعمائة وقت السحور ثم تولى ولي القضاة عبد الكريم ابن الشيخ خلف اربع  
شوال في السنة المذكورة.

And the Qadi of Qadis, Shaykh<sup>285</sup> ... 'Uthman died on 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month of *Shawwal* of the year eighty and nine hundred in the small hours of night. And then another head of Qadi's was nominated: 'Abd al-Karim the son of Shaykh Khalaf on 4<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* of the above- mentioned year.<sup>286</sup>

### NOTES

It is interesting to read of this subject regarding the legal system which was complex enough in Harar (with more Qadis among whom one has a non-specified authority, over others). This demonstrates the penetration of Muslim rights to replace the customary and local ones in the region of Harar during XVI century. Cf. however in pages 317-318.

The name Khalaf the father of the Qadi is, today, a typical name in use among Somalis.

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<sup>285</sup> The name is illegible

<sup>286</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> *Shawwal* 980 *Hegira* corresponds to 5<sup>th</sup> February 1573 and 4<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* to 7<sup>th</sup> February of the same year. In 1583 the reign of Sultan Muhammed ibn Nasir came into effect, who thereafter used to set out on expeditions against Abyssinia (see text 1119 p. 161-1621 note 101).



#### 4. THE SULTANATE OF SHEWA IN THE XIII CENTURY ACCORDING TO A NEW HISTORICAL DOCUMENT\*

Summary:

1. Preface
2. The Arabic text
3. The English Translation
4. The Muslim Shewa and its Geographic Identification
5. The Makhzumite Dynasty of the Sultanate of Shewa
6. The Internal Battles within the Sultanate of Shewa
7. The Wars of Shewa Against Neighbouring Muslim Countries
8. The Relationships of the Sultanate of Shewa with Christian Abyssinia
9. The Relationships of Muslim Shewa with Arab Countries
10. The Cultural Condition of Muslim Shewa
11. The Queens of Shewa
12. The Geographical Names in Our Document: The Name Shewa
13. Other Definitely Identifiable Geographical Names (Gidaya, Hobat, Kalgor, Degun, Gamarar, Wagarasala, 'Atquta, Karor and Harrih)
14. Geographical Names Identifiable With Probabilities (Madgah and Haddimora)
15. A Name Identifiable with *Futuh al-Habashah* (Busa)
16. The Countries of Adal; Mora and Gabarge
17. The Proper Names of Sultans and the Language of Muslim Shewa
18. Sultan 'Ali Walasma', the Victorious One Against Shewan Dynasty
19. Historical Conclusions
20. A Chronology of the Sultans of Shewa

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\* [Rassegna Di Studi Etiopici, 1941, pp. 3-361]

## § 1 Preface

Some years or so ago, I published a series of historical documents on Muslim States of southern Ethiopia,<sup>1</sup> documents I copied in Harar when I was there on a mission in 1926-1927. Later, I had the opportunity to examine, based on new data I had collected, the history of these Muslim states and particularly the one of the Sultanate of Ifât and the Emirate of Harar<sup>2</sup> and, later, of the Sultanate of Bali.<sup>3</sup>

Finding myself in Harar in 1936, I had the possibility of picking up my research on the past Ethiopian Islam once more. And, together with some others, I intend to publish in sequence, I was able to copy a document of a particular importance, which has been edited and translated here now as follows:

The manuscript I copied from and which I had on loan from one of the eminent persons of the city, contained various chronological and astronomical operettas in Arabic characters; nevertheless, copies of some narration of local history had been inserted in it, and at the end of this narration, we find this document in question duly compiled.

This document is not at all easy to read because our amanuensis was copying from the original in his turn and was not even able to read it well. So he had to leave blank spaces here and there, on which he aptly wrote بياض with red ink or had instead copied not the letters, but the graphic signs without diacritic dots, so to have a reader base himself on conjectures. Then was added great difficulties regarding human proper names and the Ethiopian place-names, which, having been written in Arabic characters and referring to facts and places many times being little

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<sup>1</sup> *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'etiopia*, here above, pp. 135-206 (cited later: *Documenti Arabi*).

<sup>2</sup> *Studi Etiopici, Vol. I, La Lingua E La Storia Di Harar*, later on pp. 281-327 (cited later: Harari).

<sup>3</sup> *Studi Etiopici, Vol. II, La Lingua E La Storia Dei Sidamo*, later on pp. 329-326.

or unknown, have become exceedingly uncertain readings. Some of those names have been vocalized, but it is not still possible to say - regarding most cases - if this vocalisation is old or influenced by more recent copyists. Only most fortunate findings of other copies would be able to give us new and more certain elements for our judgment.<sup>4</sup>

Historically speaking, this document, according to my own point of view, was very interesting; and, therefore, I did not wish to postpone its publication further. This has also been done to express my full adherence to the very nice and courageous initiative of Carlo Conti Rossini in a concrete manner because he is bent on giving the Italian School for Ethiopian Studies, which has age-old and glorious traditions, his own say, and by doing so assures it of its necessary continuity the more.

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<sup>4</sup> This document written on parchment papers has the dimensions of: 23.5 x 16 cm. and 65 leafs, leather bound with a parchment as a cover, in beautiful *Naskhi* characters. At the end of one of the tract contained in the manuscript (the *Risalah* of Shaykh Yahya ibn Muhammed al-Khattab al-Maliki on pin-pointing the time of canonical prayers), the colophon (r. 38 R) bears the date of 23<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 1280 *Hegira*, that is to say, 9<sup>th</sup> August 1863. We are, therefore, in a very recent epoch.

Our historical document is in f. 12 V - f. 13 R and is preceded by (f. 9 R - f. 11 R) other documents, about which I have already made a mention, above all in the *History of The Walasma'* and in *Storia Dei Combattenti La Guerra Santa* which I have already published (according to other versions of other manuscripts) in my *Documenti Arabi* mentioned above, which contain numbers I and IV. The manuscripts cover leafs contain annotations of various state acts of registry office and sales contracts, which partially regard the families of the emirs of Harar.

## §2 Arabic Text

ذكر التواريخ وكان موت الملكة بديت بنت مايا في سنة خمس وخمسين واربع مائة وكان اسلام جبه في زمان السلطان حربعر (د) يوم الجمعة عشر ليلة مضت من شهر جمادى الاول سنة اثنين وخمسمائة وكان انهزام امحر من ارض ورجحي شهر صفر سنة اثنين وعشرين وخمسمائة وقتل السلطان مالمسمى في جبه يوم الاحد لثلاث مضت من شهر جمادى الاول سنة تسع وسبعين وخمسمائة وكان ولاية السلطان حسين سنة خمس وسبعين وخمسمائة وكان ولاية السلطان عبد الله تسعين وخمسمائة وكان وقع القتال مع مدجه سنة تسع وعشرين وستمائة يوم الجمعة في شهر عاشوراء وامسك السلطان عبد الله في جداية بعده بستين الا قليل ومات سنت اثنين وثلاثين وستمائة لعشرين ليلة مضت من رمضان وكان ولاية السلطان محمد بن حسين تلك السنة في شوال وكان ولاية ابنه السلطان مالزرة في شهر ذي الحجة سنت ست وثلاثين وستمائة وكان تزويجه للملكة فاطمة بنت أيدارجن من زمله سنت ثلاث واربعين وستمائة وكان احراق ولله بيد جنبه في شهر جمادى الاخرة سنت سبع واربعين وستمائة واحرق التجنة بعده بستين وامسك حمه في حره بست و مات مالزره رحمه الله بسنة وكان ولاية السلطان جنبه في شهر ربيع الاخر سنت خمسين وستمائة وفي تلك السنة كان الجوع المعروف باسمه وكان موت الفقيه ابراهيم بن الحسن قاضي قضاة شوه يوم الاحد لعشر ليالي خلت من رمضان سنت ثلاث وخمسين وستمائة وفيها كان تلف عراق بيد التتار وقتل خليفته رحمه الله وكان الجوع المعروف بفسس سنت سبع وخمسين وستمائة وكان وفات السلطان جنبه يوم الخامس من شهر ربيع الاخر سنت ستين وستمائة وكان ولاية جرام جزء يوم الحادى والعشرين من ربيع الاخر تلك السنة وكان فيها حسيبتا وطاعونا كبيراً (sic) وكان قتاله مع جبر في وندلحره في شهر ذي الحجة سنت احدى وستين وستمائة وكان قتال لب بن حمسه مع عمر بن محمد في طجاله اول يوم من صفر سنت اثنين وستين وستمائة واعطى الدولة لاختيه الكبير دلجامس يوم الثلاث من صفر تلك السنة وقتل صاحب مؤره سنت ثلاث وستين وستمائة واستوت له البلاد بسنت خمس وستين وستمائة ورجع اليه الامراء والوزراء والسلطين وقتل صاحب جداية أجن سنت ست وستين وستمائة في شهر شعبان وكان قتاله مع اهل دجن يوم الجمعة في شهر عشوراء سنت ثمان وستين وستمائة وكان ولاية السلطان دلماره بن مالزره يوم الثالث من صفر تلك السنة وكان موت لب تلك السنة في ربيع الاول وكان خروج ابراهيم بن حسين على دلماره سنت تسع وستين وستمائة في شهر شوال وفيها كان قتاله مع جبرجي وجرام جزء في ولله وكان

تزوجته بنت والى اسمع في دجن في شهر صفر سنت ستعين وستمائة وكان دخول على جورت وانتقاله الى دلجامس وقتاله في وحج كان تلك السنة وكان القحط المعروف بهجته سنت احدى وسبعين وستمائة والطاعون الذي فنى فيه كبراء ولله وسلطينهم كان سنة ثلاث وسبعين وستمائة وكان وقعة أبت وامساك دلجامس مع جميع اخوانه وعسكره في اخر عاشوراء سنت خمس وسبعين وستمائة وفيها كان قتاله مع جمرار في هكله في اخر ربيع الاول وفيها كان اول مجى والى اسمع الى شوه وانتصاره على اخر صح في شهر رجب وهربه من جداه في شعبان وكان احتراق ولله بيد على بن والى اسمع في ربيع الاخر سنت ست وسبعين وستمائة وفيها كان وقعة ابل مع اهل دجن في جمادى الاول وكان انتقال دلماره من ولله وولاية دلجامس ثانية في ربيع الاول سنت سبع وسبعين وستمائة وفيها كان نهب المحرر بيد جازنان ثم ذهابه الى مق ثلاث ورجوعه خائبا وانتقال دلماره الى الحطى اخر يوم من شعبان وكان تاتى على ودلجامس في زوحر ليلة عاشوراء سنت ثمان وسبعين وستمائة وكان فيها الوقعة في ثونل وولاية عبد الله بن جناح في شهر عاشوراء واحراق أبت في اثرها ثمان وسبعين وستمائة وكان فيها ارتداد والى اسمع وفيها كان على دلجامس الى هل ونهب وجر طله وجرح في شهر رمضان وفيها كان دخول دلماره الى ابت في شهر ذى الحجة وكان دخول والى اسمع الى شوه والتولى فيها في شهر ذى الحجة لاحت عشر ليلة بقين منها وقعد في مدون (بياض) في جنسر يوم الجمعة خمس لىالى بقين منها (بياض) اول يوم من صفر سنت احدى وثمانين وستمائة وكان دخوله مع مؤخ سنت اثنين وثمانين وستمائة في المحرم وفيها كان امسك دلماره وقتله رحمه الله في صفر وكان قناء حبد في جبل حاميله وكباد فيها وكان حنيسه وكرور وحيب ووجار في ابوت فيها وفيها كان تدمير طاشمه باثرها في اخر ذى الحجة وكان نزول والى اسمع في حبي عين ونهب حبت وامج وتدميرها الى اخرها ونهب على حما وعطقوتا والتقي عسكرها في بوس وغزوه منها الى جداه في ربيع الاخر سنت اربع وثمانين وستمائة وعلى رجوعه منها عزل ملوك شوا ونزلهم عن اخرهم الى حقر مع اهلم في اخر جمادى الاولى وولى مخز وبلغنا انهم من اولاد وُد بن هاشم المخزومى وكان خرج في زمان عمر بن الخطاب ومن تولى من اولاده في شوه ملكها سنت ثلاث وثمانين ومانتين الى السنن المذكوره وذلك ثلاثمائة وتسعون سنت وكان مخالفة مخز في رمضان تلك السنن وكان غزو والى اسمع اليه يوم النحر تلك السنن وفيها كان استيصال شوه بجدايتها الى حيموره والاكثر من قنع في حاديتها وعليها راح الى كرور في تلك السنن خمس وثمانين وستمائة وكانت الوقعة العظيمة في سمه وطلوعه منها الى جداه وتخريب (بياض) جي في المحرم سنت ست وثمانين وستمائة وكان غزوة الى موره وعدل وقتل صاحبها في جمادى الاخرة سنت سبع

وثمانين وستمائة وفيها مات الحطى يخنت في جمادى الاول (بياض) وكان غزوة  
والى اسمع الى هوبت واقنائها في الشهر ذى القعدة (بياض) وفيها احرق الزتانبر  
وصحى وصلى (بياض) وقعوده في مدونه في شهر رمضان ومجيه كالجور في  
شهر ذى الحجة سنت ثمان وثمانين وستمائة .

### § 3 The English Translation

«A chronological list, The death of Queen Badit the daughter of Maya took place in the year 455.<sup>5</sup> And the conversion of Gbbah to Islam, in the epoch of Sultan Harb'air [d],<sup>6</sup> took place on the day of Friday, after the elapse of ten nights of the month of *Jumad al-Ula* of the year 502.<sup>7</sup>

And the defeat of the Amhara in the land of Warjih took place in the month of *Safar* of the year 522.<sup>8</sup> Sultan Walasma'i was killed in Gbbah on the day of Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month of *Jumad al-Ula* in the year 579.<sup>9</sup>

And the reign of Sultan Husayn started in the year 575.<sup>10</sup> And the reign of Sultan 'Abdallah started in the year 590.<sup>11</sup>

And then a battle occurred with Midguh<sup>12</sup> in the year 629 on the day of Friday in the month of '*Ashura*'<sup>13</sup> where Sultan 'Abdallah was taken in Gidaya after little less than two years. He died in the year 632 on the twentieth night of *Ramadan*.<sup>14</sup>

And the reign of Sultan Muhammed ibn Husayn started in that year in *Shawwal*.<sup>15</sup> And the reign of his son Sultan Mal-zarrah started in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 636.<sup>16</sup> And his (Sultan Mal-zarrah) marriage with Queen Fatimah Aydargun occurred in the year 643.<sup>17</sup> And

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<sup>5</sup> 455 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 4<sup>th</sup> January-24<sup>th</sup> December 1063 AD.

<sup>6</sup> See later §17. Probably it has to be read Harb 'Ar'ad.

<sup>7</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 502 corresponds to 16<sup>th</sup> December 1108.

<sup>8</sup> *Safar* 522 is the period of 5<sup>th</sup> February-4<sup>th</sup> March 1128.

<sup>9</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 579 is 24<sup>th</sup> August 1183.

<sup>10</sup> 575 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 8<sup>th</sup> June-27<sup>th</sup> May 1180.

<sup>11</sup> 590 *Hegira* is the period of 27<sup>th</sup> December 1193-15<sup>th</sup> December 1194.

<sup>12</sup> See later § 14. Maybe it ought to read Madgat.

<sup>13</sup> Muharram 629 corresponds to the period of 29<sup>th</sup> October-27<sup>th</sup> November 1231.

<sup>14</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 632 is 20<sup>th</sup> May 1235.

<sup>15</sup> *Shawwal* 632 corresponds to the period of 19<sup>th</sup> June-17<sup>th</sup> July 1235.

<sup>16</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 636 goes from 5<sup>th</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1239.

<sup>17</sup> 943 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 29<sup>th</sup> May 1245-18<sup>th</sup> May 1246. Correctly, as Michelangelo Guidi has brought my attention to, this phrase would be intended in the sense that

the arson of Walalah by *Gnbah* took place in the month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 647.<sup>18</sup> And at-Tagnah was also burnt two years later. And Hmnah was taken in Harrih one year later. Mal-zarrah died - may God be compassionate with him! - after one year.

And Sultan *Gnbah*'s reign started in the month of *Rabi' al-Akhirah* of the year 650.<sup>19</sup> And in that same year there occurred a famine called *Asah* (?), and the death of Faqih Ibrahim ibn al-Hassan the Qadi al-Qudah of Shewa took place on the day of Sunday, after ten nights had elapsed from *Ramadan* of the year 653<sup>20</sup> - And in it (year) 'Iraq was seized by the Moghul and the Caliph was killed, on whom may God be merciful!

And the famine of *Fassas* occurred in the year 657.<sup>21</sup> Then Sultan *Gnbah* died on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of *Rabi' al-Akhirah* of the year 660.<sup>22</sup>

And then came the reign of Giram-gaz'i on the day of 21<sup>st</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhirah* of that year.<sup>23</sup> Then came scarlet fever and a great plague. His (Giram-gaz'i) fight with Gabar in Wndlhrh took place in the month of *Dhual-Hijjah* of the year 661.<sup>24</sup> And the fight of Luba ibn Hamasah against 'Umar ibn Muhammed in Tugalah took place on the first day of *Safar* 662.<sup>25</sup> He renounced his throne in favour of his elder brother Dil-gamis on 3<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* of that year.<sup>26</sup>

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Sultan (Mal-zarrah) had Fatimah bint Aydargun marry one, whose name could be represented by the letters (of an uncertain reading) زمله. However, since it does not seem that this gives a satisfying sense from a historical point of view regarding the context, and keeping in mind an analogous annotation one can come across, later under 669 *Hegira*, وكان تزويجه بنت والي اسمع (which cannot refer except to the marriage of the sultan who reigned then with the daughter of Walasma'), we have to assume either one usage, which otherwise is not certified, of زوج in the same sense as تزوج or better, that, in both passages, تزويج goes to be corrected to read تزوج.

<sup>18</sup> The month of *Jumad al-Akhirah* 647 goes from 11<sup>th</sup> September to 9<sup>th</sup> October 1249.

<sup>19</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhir* 650 corresponds to the period 11<sup>th</sup> Jun-9<sup>th</sup> July 1252.

<sup>20</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 653 is 13<sup>th</sup> October 1255.

<sup>21</sup> The year 657 *Hegira* corresponds to the period 29<sup>th</sup> December 1258-17<sup>th</sup> December 1259.

<sup>22</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhir* 660 is 27<sup>th</sup> February 1262.

<sup>23</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhir* 660 is 16<sup>th</sup> - march 1262.

<sup>24</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 661 is the period of 6<sup>th</sup> October-4<sup>th</sup> November 1263.

<sup>25</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Safar* 662 is 6<sup>th</sup> December 1263.

<sup>26</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 662 is 6<sup>th</sup> December 1263.



He then killed the lord of Morah in the year 663.<sup>27</sup> And the country became his in the year 665<sup>28</sup> and the emirs, the ministers and the sultans returned to him. The lord of Gidayah, Ajn, was killed in the year 666 in the month of *Sha'ban*.<sup>29</sup> And his battle against the people of Degun took place on the day of Friday in the month of *Ashura* of the year 668.<sup>30</sup>

And the reign of Sultan Dil-marrah the son of Mal-zarrah started on 3<sup>rd</sup> of *Safar* of that year.<sup>31</sup> And the death of Luba occurred that year in *Rabi' al-Awwal*.<sup>32</sup> And the rebellion of Ibrahim ibn Husayn against Dil-marrah took place in the year 669 in the month of *Shawwal*.<sup>33</sup> Then came the fight against Gabar-ge and Giram-gaz'i in Walalah.

Then his marriage took place with the daughter of Wali Asma' in Degun in the month of *Safar* of the year 670.<sup>34</sup> The entrance of 'Ali Gurt, his departure towards Dil-gamis and his combat in *Whj* took place in that year.

And famine called *Hglah* occurred in the year 671<sup>35</sup> and pestilence in which the nobility and their sultans perished was the year 673.<sup>36</sup> And then came the battles of Abut and the seizure of Dil-gamis with all his brothers and soldiers at the end of '*Ashura* of the year 675.<sup>37</sup> Then there was his fight against Gamarar in *Hklah* at the end of the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal*,<sup>38</sup> then was the first arrival of Wali Asma' at Shewa and his victory on Ahr-sh in the month of *Rajab*<sup>39</sup> and his flight from

<sup>27</sup> 663 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 24<sup>th</sup> October 1264-12<sup>th</sup> October 1265.

<sup>28</sup> 665 *Hegira* goes from 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1266 to 21<sup>st</sup> September 1267.

<sup>29</sup> *Sha'ban* 666 is the period from 16<sup>th</sup> April-14<sup>th</sup> May 1268.

<sup>30</sup> *Muharram* 668 goes from 31<sup>st</sup> August to 29<sup>th</sup> September 1269.

<sup>31</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* is 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1269.

<sup>32</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 668 goes from 29<sup>th</sup> October to 27<sup>th</sup> November 1269.

<sup>33</sup> *Shawwal* 669 corresponds to the period of 13<sup>th</sup> May-10<sup>th</sup> June 1271.

<sup>34</sup> *Safar* 670 goes from 8<sup>th</sup> September to 6<sup>th</sup> October 1271.

<sup>35</sup> 671 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 29<sup>th</sup> July 1272-17<sup>th</sup> July 1273.

<sup>36</sup> 673 *Hegira* goes from 7<sup>th</sup> July 1274 to 26<sup>th</sup> June 1275.

<sup>37</sup> *Muharram* 675 corresponds to 15<sup>th</sup> June -14<sup>th</sup> July 1276.

<sup>38</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 675 goes from 13<sup>th</sup> August to 11<sup>th</sup> September 1276.

<sup>39</sup> *Rajab* 675 corresponds to the period of 9<sup>th</sup> September 1276 - 7<sup>th</sup> January 1277.

Gidaya in *Sha 'ban*.<sup>40</sup>

And then there was the burning of Walalah by the hands of 'Ali ibn Wali Asma' in *Rabi' al-Akhirah* of the year 676.<sup>41</sup> And then occurred the battle of Abhl with the people of Degun in *Jumad al-Ula*.<sup>42</sup>

And then came the departure of Dil-marrah from Walalah and the start of the reign of Dil-gamis once more in *Rabi' al-Awwal* of the year 677.<sup>43</sup> And then there was the raid on *al-Mhrrah* by Gaznan and his departure towards *Mq* three times and his return without achieving any result.

And the departure of Dil-marrah towards *Hatse* on the last day of *Sha'ban*.<sup>44</sup>

And there was a meeting between 'Ali and Dil-gamis in Zuwaharu on the night of '*Ashura*' in the year 678.<sup>45</sup> Then occurred the battle of Duwwanla against the reign of 'Abdallah ibn Ganah in the month of '*Ashura*' followed by the burning of Abut in the year 678.

It was then that Wali Asma' made his comeback. So did 'Ali together with Dil-gamis to Hal (?); then there was the sack of Wagar and Wagarh (?) in the month of *Ramadan*.<sup>46</sup> Then came Dil-marrah to Abut in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.<sup>47</sup>

The entrance of Wali Asma' to Shewa and the assumption of his reign there (Shewa) took place in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah*, after which he remained there (month) for eleven nights.<sup>48</sup> He sojourned in the towns

<sup>40</sup> *Sha'ban* 675 goes from 8<sup>th</sup> January to 5<sup>th</sup> February 1277.

<sup>41</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhir* 767 goes from 1<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September 1277.

<sup>42</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 676 corresponds to the period of 30<sup>th</sup> September - 29<sup>th</sup> October 1277.

<sup>43</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 677 goes from 23<sup>rd</sup> July to 21<sup>st</sup> August 1278.

<sup>44</sup> *Sha'ban* 677 goes from 18<sup>th</sup> December 1278 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 1279. The manuscript has الى but corrected to read as الى الحطى seems to be exact.

<sup>45</sup> *Muharram* 678 corresponds to the period of 14<sup>th</sup> May - 12<sup>th</sup> June 1279. The manuscript has a very difficult word to pronounce, which Michelangelo Guidi suggests, hypothetically, to be read as تاتي in the sense of 'Meeting'.

<sup>46</sup> *Ramadan* 678 goes from 5<sup>th</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1280.

<sup>47</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 678 corresponds to 3<sup>rd</sup> April-2<sup>nd</sup> May 1280.

<sup>48</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 678 is 21<sup>st</sup> April 1280.

of...in Janahsir on the day of Friday, five nights before the end of ...the first day of *Safar* of the year 681.<sup>49</sup> And his entrance with Mukha was in the year 682 in *Muharram*<sup>50</sup> after which Dil-marrah was seized and killed - may God be compassionate with him! - in the month of *Safar*.<sup>51</sup>

Then came the occupation of Hbd (?) on Hamilah mountain (?) and that of Kabad in the same year. And that of ...and Karor in Abut in the same year.

And in the same year, there occurred the annihilation of Tasimah just after, at the end of *Dhu al-Hijjah*.<sup>52</sup>

Then came the expedition of Wali Asma' to Hbi' in (?) and the sack of Hbt and Amg and their annihilation to the ground; and the raid on Hma and 'Atquta and the meeting of the two armies in Busa and the raid that left for Gidayah in *Rabi' al-Akhirah* of the year 684.<sup>53</sup>

As soon as he came back from there, he deposed the kings of Shewa and sent them all, part and parcel, to the tomb at the end of *Jumad al-Ula*.<sup>54</sup> He then made Mkhz reign. News has reached us that they (the kings of Shewa) are the descendants of the children of Wudd ibn Hisham al-Makhzumi, who had had emigrated (from Arabia) in the epoch of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab. And that his children reigned in Shewa commencing from the year 283 up to the above-mentioned year, that is to say, for 390 years.

Mkhz's rebellion took place in *Ramadan* of that year.<sup>55</sup>

And Wali Asma's raid on him followed on 10<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* of that year.<sup>56</sup> In the same year the obliteration of Shewa with its Gidayah as far as Haddimora took place, more of them were dispersed in Hadiyah (?)

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<sup>49</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> *Safar* 681 is 11<sup>th</sup> May 1282.

<sup>50</sup> *Muharram* 682 goes from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> April 1283.

<sup>51</sup> *Safar* 682 goes from 1<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May 1283.

<sup>52</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 682 goes from 20<sup>th</sup> February to 19<sup>th</sup> March 1284.

<sup>53</sup> *Rabi' al-Akhir* 684 corresponds to the period of 6<sup>th</sup> June - 4<sup>th</sup> July 1285.

<sup>54</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 684 goes from 5<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1285.

<sup>55</sup> *Ramadan* 684 corresponds to the period of 31<sup>st</sup> October - 29<sup>th</sup> November 1285.

<sup>56</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 684 is 6<sup>th</sup> February 1286.

and so they had to go to Karor in that year 685.<sup>57</sup>

Then came the great battle at Smh after which he left toward Gidayah and the devastation of...-ge in *Muharram* of the year 686.<sup>58</sup>

Then there occurred a raid on Morah and 'Adal and the killing of the lord of those regions in *Jumad al-Akhirah* of the year 687.<sup>59</sup> *Hatse Ykhnt*<sup>60</sup> died in it (year) in *Jumad al-Ula*.<sup>61</sup>

And the raid by Wali Asla' on Hobat and the occupation of same occurred in the month of *Dhu al-Qa'adah*.<sup>62</sup>

And in the same year al-Zatanbar (?), Shy and Sly ... took fire. His settlement in the town of it (country) came to be in the month of *Ramadan*<sup>63</sup> as well as his coming to Kaligor in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* of the year 688.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> 685 *Hegira* corresponds to the period of 27<sup>th</sup> February 1286 - 15<sup>th</sup> February 1287.

<sup>58</sup> *Muharram* 686 goes from 16<sup>th</sup> February to 17<sup>th</sup> March 1287.

<sup>59</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 687 corresponds to the period of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 31<sup>st</sup> July 1288.

<sup>60</sup> See further on §8.

<sup>61</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 687 goes from 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1288.

<sup>62</sup> *Dhu al-Qa'adah* 687 goes from 27<sup>th</sup> November to 26<sup>th</sup> December 1288,

<sup>63</sup> *Ramadan* 688 goes from 18<sup>th</sup> September to 17<sup>th</sup> October 1289.

<sup>64</sup> The month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* 688 corresponds to the period of 16<sup>th</sup> December 1289-13<sup>th</sup> January 1290.

#### § 4      **The Muslim Shewa And Its Geographical Identification**

This period, which this central nucleus of the document refers to, therefore, goes from 629 *Hegira*, that is to say, from 1231 to 1289.

Hence, we are in a historical period of great importance to Ethiopia, because during this particular period of time the Monarchy of the Solomonic dynasty became constituted in 1270, according to accepted chronology. Our own Document, though reached through arid chronological annotations, is giving us an apt frame of what was afoot in that very same epoch within Muslim Ethiopia.

The main event referred to is the fall of the Muslim state of Shewa and its absorption within the Sultanate of Ifât, which came to predominate Muslim Ethiopia. According to our own actual knowledge, nothing was known about the existence of any Muslim sultanate in Shewa during the Middle Ages. While in the Ethiopian Chronicles, after a so long silence of documents and monuments of deep Ethiopian Middle Ages, the Solomonic dynasty appears to be at loggerheads with the Muslim State of Ifât in the XIV century, whose monarch had already been named 'the Prince of Infidels' by the Chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon(1314-1344) and is found to be at the head of the Muslim league. In the Arab documents I collected and published some years ago, the Chronicles commence with exalting the Walasma' dynasty which ruled Ifât; and the first date mentioned is the one of 778 *Hegira* (1376-1377).<sup>65</sup> Among Arab medieval writers, al-'Umari epitomized the information which reached Cairo in 1332-1338 through Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Zaila'i and ibn Khaldun<sup>66</sup> who had both equally hinted at the supremacy of Ifât.

Now we know from this document that this supremacy acquired by Ifât and the Walasma' dynasty was due to the conquest of the Muslim

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<sup>65</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, pp. 41, 45.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibar*, edited by Bulaq, VI, p. 199.

State of Shewa and the defeat of the Makhzumite dynasty, the then Sultans of Shewa. But it is not easy to say which regions exactly were the regions of the Sultanate of Shewa. Historically speaking, Shewa historically referred to a central nucleus, which included the immediate area of the southern spine of the mountain called Tamra-bar today, and the enormous natural tower which dominated the Dankalia lowland on one hand and the rugged regions of affluents of the middle of the Blue Nile. Starting from the bulwark of Tarma-bar the highland, which is called Shewa, it dropped as a slight precipice down toward the south-west up to the watershed between the Nile and Hawash on the upper parts of Entotto. This stratum, above 2500-2800 metres high, was fertile and well-cultivated. On the west, the highland was confined by the incessant and rugged valley of Mugar. On the east it was in immediate contact with Ifât, which sloped toward Hawash and with Fatagar, which comprised the steep bank of Kasam at midway.

To this core of Shewa, different neighbouring regions used to make part during various historical epochs. Suffice it to remember the most recent changes made were the one of Menelik II who moved the western boundary of Shewa to Ghibie (Oromo Bottego) and the one of the current administrative partition which has moved the southern boundary of Shewa to the periphery of Kambatta.

I do not doubt that the Muslim Shewa شوى just referred to the above-described nucleic centre, that is, to the eastern Shewa of today. Even today, the district of Totose, immediately to the south of Dabra Berhan, is Muslim (of Amharic language); and in the region of Shano, in the south-east, Muslim groups are numerous on the periphery of Gembet. It is true that these groups are said to have migrated from Tigray and settled there, as is a diffused habit of the south Ethiopian Muslims; I do not think we should exclude that they could instead be groups that remained from older populations during olden times.

This Sultan of Shewa had, according to our document, his capital at Walalah واللاه. It has not been possible to propose any identification, above all because the place-names of the region had undergone great

change due to continual invasion. It would just be sufficient to remember that within the above-described region, just to the south of Shano in the high valley of the Enkwoy stream, the feeder of Kasam, there exists a place called Walale ወለሌ today.

## § 5      The Makhzumite Dynasty of The Sultanate of Shewa

At the head of this Sultanate of Shewa there was the Makhzumite dynasty, which claimed to originate from the famous Meccan tribe, the rival of the Omayyad dynasty, the conquering tribe of Syria, of Khalid ibn al-Walid. This also better explains why the subsequent dynasty, the 'Walasma', had also attributed itself to the Meccan genealogy, by choosing its progenitor in the person of 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, the brother of Caliph 'Ali, or even, according to another version, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, son of the Caliph himself. It is very typical of local historical tradition in the Orient to have this value, the fact I collected in 1926 from one of my Argobba informants of Ifât to the effect that in Ifât, during olden times, bloody wars were waged between a party which claimed Omayyad origins and another which was formed by groups of the descendants of Khalid ibn Walid.

This same document of mine indicates the date of the last Makhzumite Sultan's deposition in a very precise manner, that is in the month of *Jumad al-Ula* of the year 684 *Hegira* which is equivalent to the period of 5<sup>th</sup> July-3<sup>rd</sup> August 1285. The Makhzumite Dynasty, adds our Chronicler, had reigned in Shewa from 283 *Hegira* (equivalent to the period of 19<sup>th</sup> February 896-7<sup>th</sup> February 897). The period from 283 to 684 *Hegira* does not however correspond to 390 years indicated by our Chronicler as the duration of the kingdom of the Makhzumite Dynasty. Since the date and the duration of 390 have all been indicated in detail, at least in our document, it is impossible not to assume a calculating error committed by the compiler, who wrote 390 instead of 401.



## § 6      The Internal Fights Within The Sultanate of Shewa

Our Chronicle documents the last and the most agitated period of the Makhzumite Dynasty: agitated because of violent internal disagreements among the parties, at the head of whom we now find one and then another prince of the dynasty, who succeeded to the throne after armed expeditions, raids and arson. It is really a frame which presents the Muslim State during its extreme decadence later. Within the period of 632-684 *Hegira* (1234-1286) alone we find the following changes attested to in our document:

- The imprisonment of Sultan 'Abdallah in 1234 (631-632 *Hegira*).
- The armed conflict between Sultan Mal-zarrah and Gnbah in 1249-1252 (647-650 *Hegira*).
- The conquest of the throne by Gnbah in June-July 1252 (*Rabi' al-Akhirah* 650).
- The armed conflict between Luba ibn Hamasah and 'Umar ibn Muhammed: the combat of 4<sup>th</sup> December 1263 (1<sup>st</sup> *Safar* 662).
- The abdication of Sultan Giram-gaz'i on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1263 (3<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 662).
- The deposition of Sultan Dil-gamis on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1269 (3<sup>rd</sup> *Safar* 668) and the reign of Dil-marrah.
- The rebellion of Ibrahim ibn Husayn and the new armed struggle against Giram-gaz'i in May-June 1271 (*Shawwal* 669).
- The Battle of Abut and the imprisonment of Sultan Dil-gamis in June-July 1276 (*Muharram* 675).
- The new armed struggle and the return of Dil-gamis to the throne in July-August 1278 (*Rabi' al-Awwal* 677).
- The battle and the reign of 'Abdallah ibn Ganah in May-June 1279 (*Muharram* 678).
- The raid and the second return of Sultan Dil-gamis in January-

February 1280 (*Ramadan* 678).

- The return of Dil-marrah in April-May 1280 (*Dhu al-Hijjah* 678).
- The imprisonment and the killing of Dil-marrah in April 1283 (*Muharram* 682).
- The end of the Makhzumite Dynasty in July-August 1285 (*Jumad al-Ula* 684).
- At the head of these civil battles we find the descendants of four families:

a) That of Sultan Husayn, who contributed four kings, attested to by our own document: Husayn; Muhammed ibn Husayn; Mal-zarrah ibn Muhammed and Dil-marrah ibn Mal-zarrah;

b) The other is that of Sultan 'Abdallah, who contributed only one king, attested by our own document: 'Abdallah himself, who came between the reign of Husayn and that of the Sultan Muhammed ibn Husayn;

c) The third is that of Sultan Gnbah who contributed three kings, attested by our own document: Gnbah himself who dethroned Mal-zarrah; Giram-gaz'i who succeeded Gnbah; Dil-gamis, the brother of Giram-gaz'i who was dethroned by Dil-marrah; even if these last two sultans have to be associated with Gnbah;

d) The fourth is that of 'Abdullah ibn Ganah, who reigned for a few months to the detriment of Dil-gamis.

We have to bear in mind, according to the Chronicler of 390 years of the Makhzumite reign, that the above-listed four rival families are supposed to be the descendants of the Makhzumite Dynasty or claimed to be the descendants of, as is the habit in Ethiopia, a genealogy always linked with the dynasty of the founder of their kingdom.

## § 7      **The Wars of Shewa Against Neighbouring Muslim Countries**

Besides these internal disagreements seen in our document we assume that the Makhzumite Shewa was indeed busy in wars and raids against neighbouring Muslim countries as well. Not unlike al-'Umari who, in the XIV century, a few years after the events narrated by our Chronicler, lamented the weakness of the Muslim States of Ethiopia when confronted with the common Christian foe, a weakness caused by wars waged among various rival Muslim countries, jealous of one other. It would be useful at this point as well to elencate facts which our document is referring to:

- The conflict against Sultan 'Abdallah at Gidaya in 1233-1234 (631 *Hegira*),
- The conflict against Gabar-ge and combat in October-November 1263 (*Dhu al-Hijjah* 661 *Hegira*).
- The war against and the conquest of Mora and the killing of the prince of Mora in 1264-1267 (663-665 *Hegira*).
- The killing of the prince of Gidaya in April-May 1268 (*Sha'ban* 666 *Hegira*).
- The fight against the Degun in August-September 1269 (*Muharram* 668 *Hegira*).
- The fight against Gabar-ge in 1270-1271 (669 *Hegira*).
- The war against the Gamarar in August-September 1276 (*Rabi' al-Awwal* 675 *Hegira*).
- The first expedition of the Walasma' of Ifât against Shewa from December 1276-January 1277 to September 1277 (*Rajab* 675 *Rabi' al-Akhirah* 676 *Hegira*).
- The fight against the Degun in October 1277 (*Jumad al-Ula* 676 *Hegira*).
- The second expedition of the Walasma' of Ifât to Shewa which started in January February 1280 (*Ramadan* 678).

- The raid of the Walasma' on Wagara-talah (same date).
- The raid of the Walasma' on Hbt, 'Atquta and Gidaya in June-July 1285 (*Rabi' al-Akhirah* 684).
- The raid of the Walasma' against Shewa after the rebellion of Mkhz in 1286-1287 (685 *Hegira*).
- The raid on Gidaya in February-March 1287 (*Muharram* 686 *Hegira*).
- The expedition of the Walasma' against Adal and Mora in July 1288 (*Jumad al-Akhirah* 687 *Hegira*).
- The raid of the Walasma' on Hobat in November-December 1288 (*Dhu al-Qa'adah* 687 *Hegira*).

The Muslim State of Shewa, in this final period of its history, therefore, presents itself in a state of great decadence because of its extremely weak internal political conditions and due to bloody wars with the neighbouring Muslim principalities.

## § 8      The Relationships of Muslim Shewa With Christian Abyssinia

What then were the relationships between the Sultanate of Shewa and Christian Ethiopia? Our document makes mention of three detailed facts which are analysed here as follows:

a)      ‘The flight of the Amhara from the land of Warjih’, an event dated 5<sup>th</sup> February - 4<sup>th</sup> March 1128. (*Safar 522 Hegira*). Nothing is known about this event from other sources. The Warjih are a shepherd Muslim ethnic group, who later would fight against Negus 'Amda Tsyon I (1314-1344) and whose remaining groups are found scattered in the south of Ethiopia, as I have said elsewhere.<sup>67</sup> The *flight* of the Amhara could have been the result of a raid which ended in fiasco led by a certain Negus (of Zagwe Dynasty) or by a junior officer. This event, which must have had a certain local importance, was mentioned by our Chronicler almost two centuries later, and, therefore, is evidence of a certain activity undertaken by the Zagwe monarchy toward the south as well.

b)      The flight of Sultan Dil-marrah, deposed by Dil-gamis fled toward the Negus, the *Hatse*, on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1279 (the last day of *Sha'ban* 677).

This piece of information is interesting, because it proves how, during the first years of reign of Christian Ethiopia's Solomonic Dynasty, the political exiles of Muslim Ethiopia took refuge and requested assistance of the court of the Negus. The reigning Ethiopian monarch in 1279 was, according to traditional chronology, Yekuno Amlak, the first Solomonic Negus.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Etiopia Occidentale*, Rome 1932, Vol. I, p. 15.

<sup>68</sup> In an illustration of a catalogue of the British Museum 503 (Wright 27). but which has been attributed to the XVIII century, Yekuno Amlak has been presented with Muslim ambassadors (Wright W., *Catalogue of The Ethiopic Manuscripts In The British Museum* etc., London 1877. p. 21). Then we need to note that the possible attribution of wars with the Muslims to the reign of Yekuno Amlak which has been narrated by Marco Polo and referred by him to have taken place in

c) The date of *Hatse's* death between 3<sup>rd</sup> June and 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1288 (*Jumad al-Ula* 687). The name of the Negus, who died in 1288, has been written in my manuscript as *Thnt*. But Conti Rossini suggested that I read it as *Yekhunut* (the Ethiopic ይክኑኑት), the hypocorism for Yekuno Amalk: 'the name Yekunt is found in a royal list I copied from an index prepared by Matara in June 1899. Having enumerated the Zague, the list continues with መንግሥድ ክኑኑት ፲፩ ዓመት ['and Yekunut reigned for 15 years']. The list halts and immediately goes to King Za-Dengel [1603-1604] in whose time this must have been written'. The very same hypocritic Yekunut is found called (Yekuno Amlak) in the Solomonic Negus which is contained in the manuscript of D'Abbadie 133 (Chro. 94) to phrase 4 V. The list in question belongs to the XVII century. Then adds Conti Rossini:

«The Act No. 11 of my edition from Evangelo D'oro Di Dabra Libanos<sup>69</sup> dated (save my own error of calculation) from 1270 and whose copy reached us in the XIV century or the XV has, regarding Yekuno Amlak, the form ይክኑኑት. Then another form parallel to ይምርሁት, probably for ይምረሐኑ ክርስቶስ another similar name, found in a very dark document regarding the division of lands in Ambasel, which seems to be in the time of King Glawdewos<sup>70</sup> or of one of his successors. This document, unpublished, is at f. 124 V. of the Ms. or. 481 British Museum». And another parallel form is (the other hypocoristic Berhanut, in an Act by Eskender [1478-1494], manuscript or. 481 f. 92 British Museum for Berhana Sellase or for an analogous compound».

Graphically speaking, the correction of بخنت to read تحنت is very easy and, therefore, the identification of the Negus can be made certain.

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1288, does not have a confirmation in our document, at least regarding Shewa. (See Conti Rossini C. regarding all these *Marco Polo E L'Etiopia* in *Atti Del R. Istituto Veneto Di Scienze, Lettere Ed Arti*, t. X, c. IX, sc. mor, anno. acc. 1939-40, pp. 1023 and 1025).

<sup>69</sup> Conti Rossini C., *L'Evangelo D'oro Di Dabra Libanos*, in *Rendic. Acc. Lincei*, sc, mor., ser. V, Vol. X, 1901, pp. 177-219.

<sup>70</sup> Glawdewos reigned from 1540 to 1559.

As a matter of fact, Yekuno Amlak died, according to an accepted chronology, in 1285 (and so did his son and successor Yigbe'a Tsyon in 1294). Therefore, there is a discrepancy of three years between the chronology of our document and the Ethiopian one. Such chronological discrepancies do exist among other historical Christian documents and in the one of Muslim Ethiopians'; and could be attributed to various reasons.<sup>71</sup> In our case we do not exclude the chronicler or the subsequent amanuensis having recorded the date in a wrong place, also because the year has not been expressly cited but with a phrase introduced with the word: «and in it (year) in the month of ...».

Nevertheless, it is curious to find a Shewan Muslim Chronicler hinting at the death of Yekuno Amlak, the founder of the new Ethiopian state.

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<sup>71</sup> See, for example, *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 149 note 15; 143 note 17.

## § 9 The Relationships of Muslim Shewa With Arab Countries

The relationships between the Muslim states of Ethiopia and the Arab countries of the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt were frequently documented at least in the XIV century and during subsequent ones. In our document we find only one mention of events regarding Muslim countries of the East; and that is the fall of the 'Abbassids Caliphate caused by the Mongol armies.

We understand how such an event, which interested all the Muslim world, came to be recorded by our Chronicler. In this case as well there exists uncertainty about the date; because, while the fall of the Caliphate occurred during *Muharram 656 Hegira* (January-February 1285), our document presents the event through the introduction of a narration with the usual vague phrase «and in it [year]». Now, since the immediately preceding event refers to *653 Hegira*, it seems that, if we stick to the literal interpretation of the document, the seizure of Baghdad and the killing of the last 'Abbassids Caliph as well could refer to 653 instead of, as would be corrected, to 656.

We need to however note that the immediately following event cited in our document refers to *657 Hegira*; therefore, doubt could still remain about *653 Hegira* and the note on the fall of the Caliphate there could have originally had other datings, which were eliminated in subsequent copies. Unless our Chronicler, after having noted down the fact the year *653 Hegira* and before referring to the one of *657* had vaguely written ... وفيها 'and in it', without wishing much ado for its specification in a chronological sense.



## § 10 The Cultural Condition of Muslim Shewa

How was the cultural position of Muslim Shewa? It has not been possible to draw much from our document. When the Chronicler writes, it is certainly evidence of a certain level of culture and taste, per se, if not for history's sake (which would have on the other hand been exceptional!), but at least for the chronicling type narration.

Regarding the level of culture reached, suffice it to mention Faqih Ibrahim ibn al-Hasan to whom our document gives the title of *Qadi-al-Qudah* of Shewa: this proves not only the diffusion of Muslim jurisprudence, but also the Islamic-type legal organization. The cited *Qadi-al-Qudah* of Shewa died, according to our Chronicler, on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1255 (10<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 653 *Hegira*).

Only one single episode about the diffusion of the Muslim religion has been cited in our document, that is, the conversion of a country called [جَبَّاه] *Gbbah* to Islam on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1108 (10<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 502 *Hegira*). Therefore, we are now in an epoch more than one century earlier than our Chronicler; and so this event must have been extremely important because it remained in future memories. In this very same country of *Gbbah* there was a saying regarding the death of a certain Sultan Malasma'i on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1183 (3<sup>rd</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* 579), about whom nothing else is known. At any rate, seventy five years after converting to Islam, at the close of the XII century, this country of *Gbbah* was still a part of Muslim territory.

It is curious at last to note how our document attests by using the Sultanate of Shewa for the distinction of periodical famines, in a way to serve chronological references. Thus we have the famine called *Fassas* in the year 1258-1259 (657 *Hegira*); the famine called *Asah* (?) in the year 1252-1253 (650 *Hegira*) and the famine called *Hglah* in the year 1272-1273 (671 *Hegira*).

Such usage has been documented regarding Christian Abyssinia but refers to a much later epoch.<sup>72</sup> Now we know that this usage was instead old and common in Muslim Ethiopia. I have talked elsewhere about similar usages still existing among Somali people regarding the dating of important events.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. for example, Beguinot, *Cronaca Abbreviate*, Rome, 1901. p. 44, note 1.

<sup>73</sup> *Razzie E Razziatori Nella Somalia Settentrionale*, in my works: *Somalia. Raccolta Di Scritti Editi Ed Inediti*, Vol. I, Rome 1957, pp. 101-107.

## § 11 The Queens of Shewa

The first event reported by our Chronicler refers to a queen (Malikah), whose name is mentioned as Badit the daughter of Maya, who died in the year 1063 (455 *Hegira*). The reign of this Badit must, therefore, have had great importance in the Muslim historical tradition in Ethiopia during the Middle Ages, about which our document, basing itself mainly on facts of the second half of the XIII century, launches itself with this particular date which had elapsed two centuries earlier.

Who was this Queen Badit? (it is vocalized as بديت). Our document does not say anything much about her, and because it refers to Muslim Shewa exclusively, doubt may arise that she could have been a Shewan queen after all. At any rate it is worthwhile to note that some facts in our document and in others I had published earlier do mention a certain major political importance achieved by the sultans of Muslim Ethiopia. Let me mention some:

- a) The above-mentioned date regarding Queen Badit;
- b) The mentioning of Sultan Mal-zarrah's marriage with Queen Fatimah the daughter of Aydargun an event dated by our document in 1245-1246 (643 *Hegira*);
- c) The mentioning of Sultan Dil-marrah's marriage with the daughter of Walasma' the lord of Ifât, an event dated September-October 1271 (*Safar* 670 *Hegira*). This fact and the one referred to with i) reveal how political marriage alliances were frequent among tiny Muslim states of Ethiopia during the Middle Ages;
- d) The register, in another document, regarding the reign of Ifât by a certain Sultana Ma'ati-layla of the Walasma' dynasty,<sup>74</sup> whose reign lasted for two years. Since Ma'ati-Layla

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<sup>74</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 141.

immediately preceded Sabr ad-Din on the throne, Negus 'Amda Tsyon I's adversary, her reign would be fixed at the first years of the XIV century.

This political importance of women within the families of Ethiopian Muslim kings bring similar usages to our minds; for example, of the people of Sidama, who - according to a very highly probable hypothesis have *ab antiquo* constituted the substratum of peoples, at least the ones of the part of Shewa. The two reigning Sultanas *proprio jure*, Badit bint Maya and Ma'ati-Layla, bring the Christian persecutor queen to mind, the queen of the Bantu al-Hamuyyah who, during the patriarchate (Alexandrian) of Philotheus (979-1003), had reduced the Christian state of the Negus into miserable conditions. Such a queen, therefore, was not an exception for Muslim Ethiopia; and the custom of allowing women to accede to a supreme status of the state has been ascertained by our document as far as the XIV century.

## § 12 The Geographical Names In Our Document - The Name Shewa

Our document also harbours a great deal of place-names. But they are not easy to identify with places today; however I shall list the results that would allow us to compare them with other place-name documents and especially with the Ethiopian Chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon I, whose campaigns against Muslims are about fifty years subsequent to the narrated events of our document.

Above all the name: Shewa (شوى also written شوه or شوا). Even, as I have said above in paragraph 4, news of a Muslim state in Shewa prior to that of Ifât is still missing up to this very day, and the name Shewa appears in other documents as if it were a Muslim country. Today our document allows us to have a more correct interpretation about these countries.

While I was publishing my Arab Documents Regarding The History of Ethiopia, I noticed in a text relating to the famous Emir Nur ibn Mujahid (therefore, of the XVI century) that Shewa شوى had been nominated in the same list together with Sim, Nagab, Gidaya and Dakar, that is to say, with definite Muslim regions. Then I was in a quandary whether the name Shewa had been intended to refer to the famous region of the Ethiopian highland or to the homonymous district of Adal<sup>+</sup>. I have just to add that some passages from the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I had already alluded to Muslim Shewa. Let us quote the following here:

- a) The Negus, recording the foe Sabr ad-Din before the start of a new war, and his previous victories, says to have sent his armed forces ወስተ ከሉ ምድረ ተንበላት እለ ይስመ ይኩልኀረ ወግደዩ ኩብት ወፈድሴ ቀድሴ ወሀርጋዩ ወብቁል ዘር ወውስተ ከሉ ምድረ ሸዋ. «in all

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<sup>+</sup> Cf. here above, p. 158 note 75.

Muslim countries which are called Kuelgora, Gidaya, Kubat, Fadse, Qadse, Hargaya, Bequlzar and in all Shewan countries». Shewa ሸዋ therefore, as one of enemy Muslim countries, against whom the Negus' troops had fought, put the inhabitants to the sword and burnt their villages. Among other countries mentioned here: Kuelgora, Gidaya and Hargaya appear to be, as we will see further in our document, certain Muslim countries which the Muslim Chronicler refers to as having had close and continuous relationships with the Sultan of Shewa, though not a part of the same Sultanate.

In other passages of the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon, however, Shewa has been mentioned as a Christian country and subjected to the Negus. So Sabr ad-Din divided his army into three corps: one which went against the Amara;<sup>75</sup> the other against Angot, and the main one under the leadership of the Sultan himself went to Shewa, where the Negus was found. Elsewhere<sup>76</sup> the Shewan armies are mentioned being under the orders of the Christian Negus together with these of the Amara.

This apparent contradiction can be explained by either assuming a conquest (or also re-conquest) of Shewa by the Christians, a conquest which was not completed during 'Amda Tsyon I's time; or by giving the phrase «and in all Shewa countries» of the Ethiopian Chronicle the value of a stylish clause, which remained in use when Shewa - only fifty years before 'Amda Tsyon I - exercised a hegemony among the Muslims of Ethiopia. It is not the first ever example of such clauses; among others one can possibly cite the nomination of

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<sup>75</sup> The variant which has not been accepted by Perruchon ('Amda Tsyon, p. 18 is instead excellent!

<sup>76</sup> Amda Tsyon, cit., pp. 58 and 78.

the 'land of Sa'd ad-Din' when one refers to the same Muslim countries, which later on would designate it from the name of the Sultan of Ifât who died fighting with the Negus in 1415; or better still, the nomination of Ifât which, up to this very day, Shewa designates Ifât among the Muslim population of Harar, because the Muslim hegemony was exercised from Ifât starting from the XIV century to the XVI century.

- b) In support of the hypothesis of a gradual conquest of Shewa by the Christians, it could also be valid regarding another passage of the Chronicle of Amda Tsyon I's conquest to Manz, the famous region immediately to the north of Shewa. The Negus, always recording Sabr ad-Din and his past deeds against the Muslims, describes a critical situation in which he was an open target to a mass of Muslim assaults: ወእም ወሰነ ባሕር ዘሐዋሽ እስከ ዘብር ተንበላት ወምድረ ክርትያንሂ ተሐገላት ወምድረ ዜጋ ወመንዝህ እለኩሉሙ ኃቤሩሙ ሮዱኒ ወአገቱኒ «and from the banks of the River Hawash as far as Zaber (were) the Muslims; and the Christian country was ruined; and the countries of Zega and Manzeh, which were all joined in partnership, had assaulted me and surrounded me».<sup>77</sup>

Now Zega still appears to be, in the same Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I one of the vanquished Muslim countries together with Zaber and Shagwara.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, there can be no doubt that Manz (Manzeh in the old graphic), the ally of Zega against the Negus, was not one of the Muslim league.

Instead, still in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon'<sup>79</sup> I, Manz still appears to be a Christian country when we see the list of countries subject

<sup>77</sup> Amda Tsyon, cit., p. 14.

<sup>78</sup> Wor. cit., I p. 22.

<sup>79</sup> Wor. cit., I p. 11.

to the Negus.<sup>80</sup> Together with Manz, we have to add Zega which is possible to identify with Zega nominated together with Manz, as one of Muslim countries, as per other cited lists above.<sup>81</sup>

In the same Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon, therefore, both countries of Manz and Zega seem to be once Muslim, at the time of the first battle of 'Amda Tsyon I with Haqq ad-Din and Darader, who subsequently became subjects of the Negus at the period of the war between 'Amda Tsyon I and Sultan Sabr ad-Din, the successor of Haqq ad-Din. Between these two dates, therefore, the conquest of Manz by the Christians was supposed to have occurred.

To these passages by Christian writers we are to add the ones by the Muslim writers already grouped by myself elsewhere<sup>82</sup> and which appeared to me would prove «substantially that the name Shewa, which used to designate the vast region for the Christians, was used by the Muslims, and contemporarily to designate the adjacent district of Ifât, annexed by the Muslim State from as early as the XIV century». This observation of mine is being defined now in the sense that up to the last ten years of the XIII century there used to be a Muslim State of Shewa in Ethiopia which exercised a hegemony on other Muslim states; and that this Sultanate of Shewa was defeated and substituted by Ifât the head of the Muslim league; and that it is very probable how the name 'Shewa' had followed these political events, whose name having been retained as such by the Muslims for that area, always narrower, remained under their dominion, while the Christians used to apply it, more correctly, to the

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<sup>80</sup> According to my own point of view there is not one iota of doubt that the exact reading is *Manzeh* of the manuscript 143 bibliothèque and not *Manzehel* of the manuscript 861 of the British Museum which has been accepted instead, and wrongly by Perruchon in his cited edition. And then one remains aghast to find the error committed in the *Chronicle of Ba'eda Maryam* (p. 116) which Perruchon as well welcomes the reading of *Manzehel* in his own text, but mentioning the variant *Manzeh* in his footnote. (Refer to also, *Ibidem*, p. 126).

<sup>81</sup> Zega cannot have been far from Manz, because in the chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob (ed. Perruchon, p. 26) there is a story that the Negus had poles brought to him from Zega for the construction of Dabra Berhan.

<sup>82</sup> *Studi Etiopici*, Vol. I. *Harari*, pp. 13-14.



maximum part of the region, which subsequently fell into their own arms.

However, in addition to the solution, at least a temporary one of the historical and geographic question, it is apt to consider the outcome of history itself pertaining to these regions by perusing the Ethiopic and the Arabic documents mentioned here above and elicit conclusions. Shewa and with it Manz, which borders it, at the north-east were continually being conquered by a chain of Negus, and particularly so by 'Amda Tsyon I at the close of the XIII century and during the first decade of the XIV century, so much so that - as has been seen - some countries are mentioned first as Muslim and thereafter as Christian in the very same Chronicle. The coming to the throne of the Solomonic Dynasty in 1270 was immediately followed by quick expansion toward the south for the conquest of those countries which Islam had already made its own during the deep Middle Ages through events still unknown to us.

### § 13 Other Identifiable Geographical Names

Beside the name 'Shewa', which refers to the Sultanate that our history deals with, our document contains other place-names, I will be examining them here as in the following, by dividing them into categories:

- a) Place-names common to our document, to the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I and to other sources as well:
  1. Gidaya (an Arabic graphic in our document of *Futuh al-Habashah* and in my own previous Arab Documents جديا). This name is also found cited in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon though in different graphics ግዳዮ (Gidaya); ግዳይ (Giday) and certainly wrong ግደድ (Gedad).<sup>83</sup> This region has, therefore, been cited, in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon, once as one of Muslim countries devastated by the Negus himself during his first war<sup>84</sup> against Haqq ad-Din and another time in the list of the Muslim league.<sup>85</sup> We note that in both passages of the Ethiopian chronicle Gidaya has been cited together with Fadse; and that, in the second passage indicated by the chronicle and in my own Arabic documents, Gidaya has been mentioned together with Nagab: we can assume that Gidaya, Nagab and Fadse were three neighbouring districts.

In short, the Ethiopian Chronicle and my own Arabic Documents cite Gidaya together with Hargaya; and all doubts regarding this question seem to be removed because facts narrated by *Futuh al-Habashah* elencated Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim (the Left-handed's) Muslim troops, of which one military corp had joined

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<sup>83</sup> Regarding this erroneous variant see my *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above on 589 note 75. It is strange that Basset who read his Arabic manuscript based on *Futuh al-Habashah* as Gidaya: جديا (text of p. 37) has in the subsequent translation read it as Geday (transl. p. 88).

<sup>84</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon I*, cit., p. 13 text.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 48 text.

the troops of the Muslim Tribe of Shewa and Hargaya holding a special red and yellow banner, among which there appeared the troops of Goyta (جويتا) Ibrahim, the lord of Gidaya. Still in the XVI century therefore, four centuries after our document, Gidaya was considered part of Muslim Shewa.

2. Hobat (an Arabic graphic in our document and in *Futuh al-Habashah* (هوبت)). The region of Hobat, which our document says had been raided by Sultan Walasma' of Ifât immediately after the fall of the Shewa Dynasty, in November-December 1288 (*Dhu al-Qa'adah* 687 *Hegira*), has been mentioned in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I as one of the Muslim league.<sup>86</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, two centuries later, mentions the lord of Hobat, Ibrahim ibn Ahmed, who had killed Sultan Muhammed ibn Abi-Bakr ibn Mahfuz, the Sultan of Adal, and reigned for three months.<sup>87</sup> But above all, Hobat has been mentioned as having had been under the refuge of Gragn Ahmed ibn Ibrahim twice during his fight against Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed.<sup>88</sup> The region of Hobat should not have been very far from the Ethiopian highland of Harar, which was the first scene of Gragn's undertakings.
3. Kalgor (the Arabic graphic in our document كالجور) has been mentioned as one of the countries possessed by Sultan Walasma', after the fall of the Shewan Dynasty in December 1289 - January 1290 (*Dhu al-Hijjah* 688 *Hegira*). This name also appears in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I as one of the countries devastated by the Negus during his first war with Haqq ad-Din.<sup>89</sup> The Ethiopic graphic is ኩልጎራ Kulkhora (the variant ኩልጎራ Kulhara in the manuscript 143 *Bibliothèque Nationale* is certainly erroneous).

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<sup>86</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, cit., I p. 50. The Ethiopic graphic is ሆበት Hobat (in the manuscript 143 *Bibliothèque Nationale* ሆበት Hubat).

<sup>87</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., I text p. 6; trans, p. 10,

<sup>88</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., transl. pp. 15-19 and 22-23; text pp. 7-8 and 9-10.

<sup>89</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, cit., p. 13.

Kulgora has been mentioned together with countries like Gidaya, Fadse and, in general, with Muslim Shewa and Hargaya, against which 'Amda Tsyon's expedition was making for. Therefore, it was a neighbouring area of Shewa.

Al-'Umari<sup>90</sup> as well mentions *Kulgora* as a principal district of Ifât (he wrote between 1342 and 1349, during a period in which the Ifât hegemony was soundly consolidated).

b) b) Common place-names in our document and that of the Ethiopian Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I:

1. Degun: in our document دجن; in the Chronicle ደጉን (or according to manuscript 861, British Museum ደጉን : Degun).

The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon mentions Degun in the list of the Muslim league between Wagarsala and Gamarar (see later on No. 2 and 3), countries which Degun would, therefore, appear to neighbour.<sup>91</sup> Our document, then, mentions how Sultan Dil-gamis of Shewa, after having killed the lord of Gidaya, fought against the people of Degun in August-September 1269 (*Muharram* 668 *Hegira*); and how more fighting took place at Degun in the following month for the fall of Walalah, the capital of Muslim Shewa, in the hands of the Walasma', of Ifât which really took place in September-October 1277 (*Jumad al-Ula* 676 *Hegira*).

2. Gamarar: جمارار in our document; ገመራር in the Chronicle. Our document refers to the fighting of the people of Gamarar against Sultan Dil-marrah in Shewa in August-September 1276 (*Rabi' al-Awwal* 676 *Hegira*). This fighting took place at a place called Hklah هكله (not of a certain vocalization), which, therefore, was in the region of Gamarar or not far away from it. The Chronicle of

<sup>90</sup> *Masalik al-Absar*, cit., p. 8

<sup>91</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, p. 49.

'Amda Tsyon I makes mention of Gamarar within the list of the Muslim league<sup>92</sup> beside Degun (see above in No, 1).

3. Wagara-tala: *وَجَرَطَلَه* in our document; *ወገርጸላ* in the Chronicle. Wagara-tala has been mentioned in our document, because the Walasma' of Ifât, together with the dethroned Sultan Dil-gamis of Shewa, raided there in January-February 1280 (*Ramadan* 678 *Hegira*), after the wars that had immediately preceded the fall of the Shewa Dynasty. The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon mentions Wagara-tala within the list of the Muslim league<sup>93</sup> beside Degun and Gamarar (see above Nos. 1 and 2).
4. Atquta: *عَطْقُوطَا* in our document. 'Atquta has been cited because, immediately before the deposition of the Sultan of Shewa, the Walasma' of Ifât had raided 'Atquta, where they reached Gidaya across Busa in June-July 1285 (*Rabi' al-Akhirah* 684 *Hegira*). From this very fact, therefore, we can reach the conclusion that 'Atquta was near Gidaya, which, as we have seen here above, was part of Muslim Shewa.

The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon mentions in its list of Muslim countries<sup>94</sup> a country named *አጥቂጥ* Atqit, which seems to be identified with 'Atquta; that is to say after Kum-Geday, Karoro and Gito in order (re Kum-Gidaya and Karoro (see Nos. a 1 and b 5).

5. Karor: *كَرُور* in our document; *ከርሮ* in the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon. Karor was mentioned in our document on the occasion of wars that had immediately followed the fall of the Shewan Dynasty, that is, in 1286-1287 (685 *Hegira*). In the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon Karor (the Ethiopic graphic: Karoro) has been mentioned in the list of the Muslim league after Kum-Geday and

<sup>92</sup> Ibidem, p. 50.

<sup>93</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, p. 49.

<sup>94</sup> Ibidem, p. 49. The variant *عَطْقُوطَا* 'Atquta: *አጥቂጥ* 'Atqit could have had been or phonetically so, due to frequent exchanges of: W : Y or, graphically speaking, due to the easy error of *ቂ* for *ቀ*.

before 'Atquta (see above No. 4).

6. Harrih: حَرّه in the graphic of our document: vocalized as حَرَّه Harrih. The country of the Harrih has been mentioned because of a war which was backed by the rebel (and the future Sultan) Gnbah, the adversary of the Shewan Sultan Mal-zarrah, in 1250-1251 (648 *Hegira*). This region, therefore, must have been within the territory of Shewa.

The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon in its list of the Muslim league, cites<sup>95</sup> the name Harri which could be identified with the Harrih of our document. I would like nevertheless to make it known that the same chronicle has also a country called ሐርያ Harya in its list, which still seems to correspond with our Harrih, albeit less directly.

Our document, then, also cites a country called وندلحره Wndl-hrh (non-vocalized) where a battle took place between the Shewan Sultan Giram-gaz'i and the people of Gabar in October-November 1263 (*Dhu al-Hijjah* 661 *Hegira*). It is possible to assume that it regards the partition of Harrih, analogous to the list drawn by the Muslim league cited in the Ethiopian Chronicle which attests also to other regions, Gidaya and Kum-Gidaya (see above in letter A, No. 1); La'lay Waz and Tahtay Waz; Dabi-Hormay and Dabi-Hadala, etc.

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<sup>95</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, p. 52.

## § 14 Geographical Names Identifiable With Probabilities

To these lists of place-names, identifiable with certainty, other names could be added, which - though common to our document and to the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon - cannot be identified except for corrections and conjectures. As follows:

1. Mdgah. The Arabic graphic of our document is **مدجه**, which is vocalized as **مدجه** in my manuscript. A name read thus: Midguh is not to be found in any other source. But the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon has it as **መድጎት** (in the manuscript 143 *Bibliothèque Nationale*).<sup>96</sup> This place-name, which could correspond, with an easy exchange of Arabic writing of **ج** for **خ**, to **مدجه** of our document, is easier still to compare when one imagines that, on the other hand, the similar Ethiopic writing of **ጎ** can possibly be exchanged with **ገ** and owing to the preceding name to this **መድጎት** (that is **ሳሐን**), Perruchon indicates one more reading (doubtful) **ሳሐን**. The most probable correction, therefore, seems to be **መድጎት** and that is to say Madgat. The correspondence between **መድጎት** and **مدجه** would thus be perfect and there would only remain to be explained the vocalization **مدجه** as the later one which had been probably influenced by the ethnic name Midgo which derives from the famous caste of hunters who live among Somali groups. However, it entails and conjecturing calls for verification.

2. Haddimorah. The Arabic graphic of our document is **حدموره** which is vocalized as **حَدْمُورَه** Haddimorah. This place has been nominated together with Karor (see above § 13 b, No. 5) at the occasion of events of 1286-1287 (685 *Hegira*) which followed the fall of the Shewan Dynasty.

The Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon has the name **ሐዳቂር** Hadaqir in the list of the Muslim league. The exchange in the Arabic writing of **مو** with **قو** is easy enough; and hence **حَدْمُورَه** Haddimorah could be corrected to read **حَدْقُورَه** Haddiqorah. So we could have a certain correspondence

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 49.

between the Arabic Haddiqorah and the Ethiopic Haddaqir, with the exchange of W:Y, similar to the one we have come across above (see §13 B, No. 4) between the Arabic 'Atquta and the Ethiopic Atqit. Albeit regarding this case, this question ought to be reserved for further studies.

It is obvious that there would be a great deal of identification through more conjectures, but in this field conjecturing could easily drift one to sheer fantasy. And, lack of other texts for new reference, I think ought to stop us from any other foul play regarding correction of writings of an Arabic word here and an Ethiopic word there. It would render the subject hypothetically analogous. I prefer to consider myself satisfied with the above-listed identifications, which as a whole, would enrich our knowledge about the medieval Ethiopian Muslim and would render our progress sure and safe, even if not totally.



## § 15 A Name Identifiable In Futuh Al-Habashah (Busa)

*Futuh Al-Habashah*, written three centuries after our document, has provided meagre help. I cannot help, besides reckless hypothesising, but cite one single name which appears to be common to both our document and Futuh:

1. Busa: بوسَ in the Arabic graphic of our document: بوس in Futuh<sup>97</sup> and بوسا in another passage.<sup>98</sup> There from Busa did leave, according to our document, the troops which raided Gidaya in June-July 1285 (*Rabi' al-Akhirah* 684 *Hegira*), during military operations conducted by the Walasma' of Ifât immediately before the decadence of the Shewan Dynasty.

According to *Futuh*, Busa is a 'great river below Awawaldah',<sup>99</sup> and there Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim defeated a body of Abyssinian (Christian) troops of Dawaro, which tried to surprise him. The identification with the Busa of our document seems to be probable.

2. Janahsir (جنحسر in the Arabic graphic of our document). Walasma' during his campaign against Shewa, enters Janahsir at the end of 680 *Hegira* (which ended on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1282).

This name is also found in my *Documenti Arabi*, though written جناحسر and designates a place where, having left Aussa, one of the commanders aimed to dispute the throne of Harar during the last ten years of the XVI century: Mansur ibn Muhammed ibn Ayyub. Mansur left for Janahsir in August-September 1577 (*Jumad al-Akhirah* 984 *Hegira*) and was killed by rebels en route (*Documenti Arabi*, here above, p. 163).

Futuh also cites the name in the graphic as جناسر (*nisbah*: الجناسري) and alludes to this country which is situated 'near the Sultan's

<sup>97</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, p. 73 (text).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 132. Mondon. Vidailhet's manuscript, which Basset designates with the letter C, has the variant بوشا which seems to be erroneous.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem* p. 73: بوس و هو نهر كبير من تحت او اولده

territory' that is, 'Umar-Din of Harar, since it was to there that Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim had gone to surprise the conspiring emirs, who were expecting to benefit from the misunderstandings between the Imam and the sultan (*Futuh al-Habashah*, p. 80 text: جناسر قريبا من بلد السلطان), prior to the war with Degalhan in 1527. Futuh's Janahsir is situated at two days walk from Zirbah, which was in the country of Harla that lied east of Harar. Therefore, we ought to assume a certain place in the lowland inhabited by the Somali 'Isa, at the slope of the Harari Highland toward Hawash Valley.

Therefore, there still remains the doubt regarding the connection between Janahsir of our document, which is possibly near Shewa, and *Futuh's* Janahsir; while nothing excludes Janahsir mentioned in *Documenti Arabi* from that of Janahsir mentioned in *Futuh*.

## § 16 The Countries of Adal, Mora And Gabar-ge

Among cited place-names in our text, the ones of Adal, Mora and Gabar-ge deserve closer examination from the historical point of view:

1. Adal. Our document has the graphic **عدل** which is the same as the one that appears in al-'Umari's.<sup>100</sup> In the Ethiopic chronicle the initial 'Ayn is constantly substituted by Hamzah.

Pertaining to the extension of Adal and other information that came from other various sources, I have already referred to elsewhere.<sup>101</sup> Suffice it here to add that, according to our document, the Walasma' of Ifât, after the deposition of the Shewan Dynasty, led various military operations aimed at the submission of the Shewan territory and the affirmation of his own hegemony on Muslim countries. One of these operations was the raid on Adal (and on Mora), which, was concluded by the killing of the 'lord of Adal and Mora', in July 1288 (*Jumad al-Akhirah* 687 *Hegira*). Therefore, Adal was an emirate with a local prince, probably recognizing the hegemony of Shewa. From 1288 it passed instead under the hegemony of Ifât. We have seen somewhere else how, almost one and a half centuries later, Adal in its turn became the main Muslim principality.<sup>102</sup>

2. Mora (**موره** in the graphic of our document), 'The Lord of Mora', that is to say, the emir of this region was defeated and killed by Sultan Dil-gamis in 1264-1265 (663 *Hegira*). See here above regarding the events of 1288 on No. 1. Mora has also been cited by the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon (**ሞራ** Mora in the Ethiopic graphic) as one of Muslim countries. It was situated beyond the River Hawash in the vicinity of *Yas* stream,<sup>103</sup> in an area not easily identifiable today. Mora is found in the

<sup>100</sup> *Masilik al-Absar*, cit., p. 9.

<sup>101</sup> *Harari*, further, on pp. 293-294.

<sup>102</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., p. 149 note 48.

<sup>103</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, p. 44 (in relation with p. 43).

Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon being constantly named together with Adal; and we find the very same in our document referring to the expedition of 1288 against Adal and Mora. Therefore, it is a question of two neighbouring regions.

Gaudefroy Demombynes was, as a matter of fact, induced to correct the name of this region from 'Adal al-'Umara', quoted from al-'Umari,<sup>104</sup> to 'Adal wa-Morah'. This correction could graphically appear to be improbable; and in fact the name 'Adal of the Emirs' could also be historically explainable.

3. Gabar-ge or Gabar (جبرجي in the Arabic graphic of our document and جبر as well).

The people of this region first fought against the Shewan Sultan Giram-gaz'i, with whose troops they clashed in a place called Wndl-harrih in October-November 1263 (*Dhu al-Hijjah* 661 *Hegira*). And subsequently, after having had Sultan Giram-gaz'i their staunch enemy deposed, the people of Gabarge took his side against the new Sultan Dil-marrah in 1270-1271 (669 *Hegira*), and continued to fight in the same Walalah, the capital of Shewa, as if Giram-gaz'i himself were fighting against Dil-marrah.

*Futuh al-Habashah* does mention the region of Gabar-ge as (جبرجي in the Arabic graphic). It was situated in Waj'<sup>105</sup>, on the right bank of the River Hawash<sup>106</sup> in front of Zeqwala, within the country inhabited by the Gurage today. If, as is probable, the Gabar-ge of our document is the same Gabar-ge mentioned by *Futuh*, we find the participation of the troops of the nowadays Gurage area attested to and confirms their taking part in the internal fights within Muslim Shewa as early as the XIII century.

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<sup>104</sup> *Masalik al-Absar*, p. 24.

<sup>105</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, p. 134 (text) وهو موضع يسمى جبرجي في ارض وج

<sup>106</sup> As a matter of fact the Negus was at Gabarge during Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's expedition, who, after having taken *Ziqalah* (that is to say Zeqwala), was already advancing beyond Dukam (immediately on-the south-east of the current Addis Ababa) to put the Abyssinian capital Badaqa afire (p. 134 and further); and found himself separated from Hawash Valley by the Muslims (p. 138 text).

This identification, which could appear to be doubtful because of the space of a good three centuries that separates our document from Futuh, has been confirmed by the Ethiopian Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob which has recorded how the governors of Waj and those of Geber (ግብር in the Ethiopic graphic) used to hold the title of Hegano.<sup>107</sup> Gabarge, therefore, was already subjected by Christian Abyssinia in the XV century; and the above-mentioned chronicle confirms the bonds between Gabar-ge and Waj too.

Regarding the graphic *Geber* for Gabar in Arabic documents, it is probable that it is only a question of an error committed by the amanuenses when compared with the only passage of the Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob that really refers to Gabar-ge which is the afore-mentioned one. I say so, because the other two passages, which in Perruchon's index refer to the one that he calls the country of Geber,<sup>108</sup> by alluding instead to 'Geber-bet' which was one of the service quarters of the royal house, in charge of banquets (Geber). Just to begin with, it is curious to see that the reading of Perruchon's *Geber* had also influenced Basset as well who, in his translation of Futuh reads the Arabic جبرج as *Gabar-ge*, up to when he reaches p. 221 and instead as *Gabarge* from p. 241 onward.

This study on Gabarge seems to me then to have had a particular historical importance because it allows us to reconstruct the history of the two Gurage countries. Thus we in fact find Gabar at the summit of the valleys of great lakes, first Muslim and united with the Muslim Shewa from as far as the XIII century; then subjected by the Negus in the XV century; then attacked afresh by the Muslims in the XVI century. A great deal of hypotheses can be made on what had really happened in these Gurage countries prior to the XIII century: if that is so, as is very probable, the originally Sidama population must have had undergone Christian Abyssinian colonization before the Muslim one. Besides the above-listed events lasting to the XVI century, a need arises to add the Oromo invasion

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<sup>107</sup> *The Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob*, cit., p. 15.

<sup>108</sup> *The Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob*, pp. 30 and 38.

as well as the newest Shewan advance in the epoch of Menilek II. But the one that seems particularly important to me is above all the calling attention regarding these successive waves of invaders from different places of origin, which renders the ethnical history of the Gurage particularly complicated.

## § 17 The Proper Names of Sultans And The Language of Muslim Shewa

What was the spoken tongue in Muslim Shewa? Here we come across proper names of Shewan monarchs and princes in our document which, though not of easy interpretation, seem to be composed of a Semitic language of an Ethiopic group. We can also understand from this field that the hypotheses and conjectures derived could be easy and easily dangerous as well. Let me confine myself to examining the names:

1. Giram-gaz'i (جرام جزء) the Arabic graphic in our document [the vocalization is the same as the one of the document]). This name seems to be a compound whose first part comes to be linked to the root ገረመ 'verendum, terribilem, formidabilem esse' and the second, ገዛ 'dominare, acquirere, possidere'. Giram-gaz'i would, therefore, have the quasi-value of 'terrificus dominus' an equivalent to the epithet Mar'ed Azamch, which was borne, many centuries later, by the lords of the Abyssinian Shewa.

2. Dil-gamis (دِلْجَامِس) the Arabic graphic of our document). The name of this sultan also seems to be a compound: the first part comes to be identified with ደል victory; the second is less easily interpreted because the root ገመሰ 'in partes dividere' does not seem to give a probable value to *gamus*, the name in question. I had thought as well of *gamus* ጋሙስ *buffalo* in a way that Dil-gamis (or Dil-gamus?) could be a name like Ba-del Anbasa 'Lion of Victory'. So, in our case: 'Dil-gamus' is almost 'the Victorious Buffalo'. Conti Rossini, though agreeing with me that the belief in such a conjecture would be very vague for now, reminds me of the name Oda-gosh in the royal list of Axum, composed of *Gosh*, a Cushitic (and Amharic) name for buffalo; and that in a certain Act of King Eskender [1478-1494] there appears a certain Harba Gos (a manuscript in the British Museum or. 481, ph. P I).

3. Dil-marrah (دِلْمَارَّه) in the Arabic graphic of our document).

The name of this sultan has also the first part ድል *victory*, and this is indirect confirmation of what we have said above on No. 2. The second part of the name Marrah can have us assume the word መርሐ *ducere* (መራሐ, *dux*); therefore: Dil-marrah is quasi- *ad victoriam ducens*.

4. Harba'ir (حَرْبَيْر in the Arabic graphic of our document). The name of this sultan as well seems to be a compound one, a part of which is certainly Harb *spear*. The second part comes to be connected with ዐረዩ (or better with አረዩ) *legere, colligere, conquirere spicas* or አረረ *decerpere, metere, demetere, colligere* and this name sounds almost like: *Mower of spears*? One could however dare to amend حربير into حربرد and have it read as Harb 'Ar'ad *Terror of Spears*, an already famous name borne by a Muslim prince at the close of the XIV century.<sup>109</sup>

5. Gaz-nan (جَزَان in the Arabic graphic of our document). The name of this head who had lead some raids in 1278-1279 (677 *Hegira*) is also a compound one. While the first part seems to me of a dubious meaning, the second part is certainly *nagn* disperser, a name we find in other historical Ethiopic names, as for example of those monarchs like Hezba Nagn, Ba-del Nagn, Mehreka Nagn, etc. It would be legitimate to surmise that the first part for the name *Gaz-* refers to ገዐዝ *impedimenta exercitus* (the Amharic ቅዝ) and this name would mean *Gaz-nagn the disperser of caravans*?

But I believe that the following names are not easily explained: Mal-zarrah (the Arabic مَالَزَرَّة) Mal-asma'i the non vocalized Arabic مَالِاسْمَعِي, which seems to have the first part equal (the second could also have us remember the name of the progenitor of the dynasty of the sultans of Ifât: 'Walasma', whose name our document writes as 'Wali Asma' والاسمع);<sup>110</sup> and so is the name of Sultana Fatimah's father, the

<sup>109</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 142 note 16.

<sup>110</sup> [One could also probably conjecture that the first part of these two names comes to be connected with Mele' (in Ethiopic: 'plenitude') and thus *Mal-Asma'i* would have the value of, as a reign name, he who makes all obey. (*Sam'a* has also the value of *obeying*), while *Mal-Zarrah* would be tantamount to 'he who disseminates all (the enemy)' (*Zar'a* also 'to disseminate, to scatter')]



wife of Mal-zarrah: Aydargun (ايدارجُن in the Arabic graphic of our document). These three names also have an Ethiopian Semitic aspect. The analyses of personal proper names, therefore, confirm the hypotheses, as a whole, that in Muslim Shewa was spoken an Ethiopian Semitic language, analogous to what we have seen elsewhere regarding the document of Ifât.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Harari*, cit., further on, on p. 297.

## § 18 Sultan 'Ali Walasma', The Victor Against The Shewan Dynasty

The invasion of the Shewan Dynasty, which later ended victorious by overcoming it hence, assuming the hegemony on Muslim Ethiopia, was achieved by the Walasma' of Ifât. The one who achieved this undertaking is called 'Ali Wali-Asma' in our document. The name 'Ali does not appear, within the indicated epoch, in the History of The Walasma' which has been already published by myself.<sup>112</sup> The First Walasma', who ever had had the name 'Ali in the history, is Qat 'Ali, who was the adversary of Negus Sayfa 'Ar'ad (1344-1372) and Dawit I (1382-1411).<sup>113</sup> Therefore, we precede our document by at least one century. Though it is singular to see this name being overlooked in the History of The Walasma', just the name of him who, having beaten the sultan of Shewa, had assured the new phase in the State of Ifât. We however ought not to forget that the principal core of the History of the Walasma' refers to events occurring in the second half of the XV century, therefore, very far in space and time and regards diverse situations from what has been narrated in our document. The origins and the first periods of time of the Walasma' Dynasty constitute a brief preamble in the history, which has no date as far as 778 *Hegira* (1376-1377).

Nevertheless, the chronological calculation of the first Walasma' reign is not at all uninteresting if we resort to history. 'Umar Walasma', the founder of the dynasty, died 104 years before the commencement of Haqq ad-Din I's reign which was in 778 *Hegira*. So the demise of 'Umar Walasma', and the commencement of his son Baziyu's reign have been dated, according to history, from 674 *Hegira* (1275-1276).

Now then, according to our document, the Shewan Sultan Dil-

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<sup>112</sup> In *Documenti Arabi* cited here above on page, 141; but instead the name 'Ali is found in the article *Il Sultano Dello Scioa*, as here above on pp. 214-215.

<sup>113</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above on page 142 note 15.

marrah marries «the daughter of Wali Asma'» in *Safar* 670 (8<sup>th</sup> September-6<sup>th</sup> October 1271). And five years later, in *Rajab* 675 (9<sup>th</sup> December 1276 – 7<sup>th</sup> January 1277), Wali Asma' leads his first expedition against Shewa. During the subsequent years, Ali the son of Wali Asma', here mentioned for the first time, comes to set Walalah on fire, the then capital of Shewa, in *Rabi' al-Akhirah* 676 *Hegira* (1<sup>st</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> September 1277). It could, therefore, possibly appear that 'Ali ibn Walasma' had succeeded his father during the expedition against Shewa in 675 *Hegira* and that he had led this expedition successfully.

The comparison with the History of The Walasma' would bring us very near to the two chronologies, whose discrepancy would only be of one year, after having fixed the History's date for the death of Walasma' in 674 *Hegira*, while our document has the year 675.

Should we then consider the conjecture excessive when we doubt that *Baziyu*, the name of the son and the successor of Walasma', according to history, was really a nickname or the throne name, and that he also had borne the Muslim name 'Ali? They are highly vague hypotheses for the time being which only new discoveries and more documents would enable us to exclude or confirm. Albeit, we have to note that the predecessor of Haqq ad-Din as well is called Harb 'Ar'ad<sup>114</sup> in History of The Walasma', while his Muslim name, according to al-Maqrizi<sup>115</sup>, was Ahmed.

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<sup>114</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 142 note 16.

<sup>115</sup> *Kitab al-Ilmam*, ed. G. Zaydan, p. 9.

## §19 Historical Conclusions

Should we intend to present a résumé regarding historical results of the examination of our document published here, we can say that:

1. Shewa (probably the eastern part of the region called Shewa today) was the seat of a Muslim sultan, which according to tradition was founded in 896-897(283 *Hegira*). At the head of this Sultanate, which had its capital at Walalah, was the Makhzumite Dynasty, which claimed its origin from the famous Meccan Makhzumite tribe, the rivals of the 'Omayyads.

2. In the XIII century the Sultanate of Shewa appeared to be already weakened due to internal disagreements provoked by various parties and by various claimants to the throne and because of wars waged against the emirs of other Muslim mini-states, who - though subjected to the hegemony of Muslim Shewa - never hesitated to have a go with periodical expeditions and raids just to affirm their own autonomous status.

3. Meanwhile, the Walasma' Dynasty's roots were extending deep in neighbouring Ifât, and was constituting a militarily strong state there. The Shewan Sultan Dil-marrah tried to ward off an attack, by concluding a matrimonial alliance by marrying the daughter of Walasma' in September-October 1271 (*Safar* 670 *Hegira*). But five years later, Walasma' sided with Prince Dil-gamis, already deprived of authority by Dil-marrah' and entered Shewa in December 1276 January 1277 (*Rajab* 675). His son, 'Ali ibn Walasma', continued the war which had repeated successes amongst which the seizure and the killing of Sultan Dil-marrah was another in May 1283 (*Safar* 682), concluding with the overthrow of the Makhzumite Dynasty in July-August 1285 (*Jumad al-Ula* 684).

4. A brief tentative of installing a prince devoted to the Walasma' on the throne ended in a fiasco; and after only four months (November) 1285 = *Ramadan* 682), 'Ali ibn Walasma' ventures another

war and thus completed the conquest of Shewa and imposed his own hegemony by force of arms, on other Muslim countries (Adal, Mora, Hobat, etc.).

5. These events were afoot, while in neighbouring Christian Abyssinia the throne of the Negus passed from the Zague to the new Solomonic Dynasty in 1270. It seems that the internal crisis in Christian Ethiopia did not have a direct influence on Muslim Shewa. But it is certain that the state of weakness in which it found itself, as we have said, Shewa, prevented the Muslims from benefitting from the Abyssinian internal melee. Instead the new Solomonic Dynasty, as soon as it became consolidated on the throne, started to make its influence felt and soon after turned its face directly toward Muslim Shewa. Indeed on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1279 (30<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 677 *Hegira*) Dil-marrah, the sultan of Shewa, while busy fighting the Shewan rebels who were seconded by Walasma', took refuge 'under *Hatse's* roof', that is, Negus Yekuno Amlak.

Fifty years later, the Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I attested that the Muslim states were vassals of the Negus, as were Ifât<sup>116</sup> and Hadiya<sup>117</sup> who paid the Negus a *gada*, a gift of homage. It was, as we have seen above, and during the reign of 'Amda Tsyon himself that some Shewan regions such as Manz and Zega that were annexed to the Christian state, paid tribute, while they were still making a part of that of the Muslim one.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *Cronaca Di 'Amda Tsyon*, p. 12 and 28.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 16.

<sup>118</sup> It is also apt to consider the new aspect which in a certain sense comes now to have the figure of an Ethiopian saint Gabra Manfas Qeddus, which is reported as very probable - according to Ing. Guidi [*A Brief History of The Ethiopian Literature*, Rome 1932, pp. 20-21) and Conti Rossini - regarding the XIII century. The passage, vague as it is for the interpretation of geographical proper names, in which our document talks about an occupation of a certain place called (Hbd?) at the top of a mountain called (Hamilah) and about a country called Kabad by the followers of 'Ali Walasma' reminds one of *Medra Kabd* 'the country of Kabd' a territory that recalls Mount Zeqwala to mind, a monastery and centre of the preaching place of the saint, Gabra Manfas Qeddus. And, however, the existence and the activities of the Sultanate of Shewa, now attested by our document, clarifies the denomination of *Medra 'Arab* 'Land of Arabs' which the *acts* of Gabra Manfas Qeddus gives as a name to the country that had been the scene of miracles shown by that saint (Cf. the review of Conti

The attack launched by Sabr ad-Din, the sultan of Ifât, and then by the Muslim league against 'Amda Tsyon came, therefore, to be historically considered as a reaction taken by the Muslims against this advance to the south, which Christian Abyssinia had ventured to take under its new dynasty.

6. The Muslim northern Ethiopia subsequently had various states within its region, whose seat came to be always pushed further toward east, while Christian Abyssinia was bent on advancing in the same direction:

- a) first, as far as we know to date, the Sultanate of Shewa, which fell in 1285: the Makhzumite Dynasty;
- b) then, the Sultanate of Ifât, which - due to events unbeknown to us, but resulting from the Abyssinian conquest of a good part of the territory - had transferred its seat to Adal prior to 1435-1436:<sup>119</sup> The Walasma' Dynasty;
- c) the Sultanate of Adal, whose capital was transferred to Dakar and then to Harar by Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din in July-August 1520;<sup>120</sup> The Walasma' Dynasty;
- d) the Sultanate of Harar, which lasted to August-September 1577, and came to be transferred to Aussa<sup>121</sup> to avoid the pressure of the Oromo tribes who were now invading the Ethiopian highland, by Imam Muhammed Gasa: The Walasma' Dynasty and the diarchies of Gagn;
- e) the Imamate of Aussa which has been attested to up to the reign of Imam 'Umar-din ibn Adam, who had ascended the throne in 1672.<sup>122</sup> Aussa was, on an unknown date to us, invaded by the Danakil;

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Rossini to Kammerer, *Essai Sur L'histoire Antique De L'Abyssinie*, in *Orinte Moderno*, VI, 1926, p. 345).

<sup>119</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., above, p. 145.

<sup>120</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, *Ibidem*, p. 148, note 46.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 164.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 194.

- f) the Emirate of Harar, which came into being because of its separation from the Imamate of Aussa in the XVII century and whose monarch, attested to by our documents, is 'Ali ibn Da'ud, who ascended the throne on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1647.<sup>123</sup> The Emirate of Harar thereafter would last for more than two centuries up to the reign of Emir 'Abdullahi, which closed with the Shewan occupation in January 1887.

7. Our document, therefore, attests to the expansion of Islam in the southern Ethiopian highland more than it had up to then, thus giving evidence that in Shewa itself the Christian reigns of the Negus did not have to superimpose themselves on barbarian and pagan tribes, but on a Muslim state of an Arab culture and which had retained its independence from as far back as 1285.<sup>124</sup>

We also have to consider the subsequent line of retreat of the south Ethiopian Muslims who kept moving away from Shewa to Ifât and then to Adal, always in an eastward direction. This indicated how the progress made by Christian Ethiopia in Shewa and in the neighbouring regions came into effect from west to east (and not from north toward south). So western Shewa today, from Dabra Libanos to Mugar must have been taken by the Negus before eastern Shewa.

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<sup>123</sup> *Gli Emiri Di Harar*, here further, p. 368.

<sup>124</sup> This situation of Muslim Shewa during the XIII century also gives new value to Arabic scripts discovered in the regions of Arussi and Charchar by P. Azais. These inscriptions are, however, still highly uncertain to interpret. From the first publication of Ravaisse (in *France Illustrée*, of 27<sup>th</sup> October, 1923) up to the observations made by Littmann (*Arabische Inschriften Aus Abessinien*, in *Zeitschrift für Semitistik*, Bd. III, 1925, pp. 236-246) and to the second publication made by Ravaisse (in Azais R. P. and Chambard R., *Cinq Années De Recherches Archeologiques En Ethiopie*, Paris 1931, Vol. I, text pp. 283-309, who was not able to pay attention to my own observations

## § 20 A Chronology of The Sultans of Shewa

It would be useful to unify the chronological data regarding the Sultans of Shewa, as are found in our document:

1. Queen Badit bint Maya. She died in 1063.
2. Sultan Harba'ir (or Harb 'Ar'ad). He reigned from 16<sup>th</sup> December 1108.
3. Sultan Mal-asma'i. He died on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1183.
4. Sultan Husayn. He ascended the throne in 1179-1180.
5. Sultan 'Abdallah, ascended the throne in 1193-1194; died on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1235.
6. Sultan Muhammed ibn Husayn ascended the throne in June-July 1235.
7. Sultan Mal-zarrah ibn Muhammed, ascended the throne in July-August 1239.
8. Sultan Gnbah. Ascended the throne in June-July 1252; died on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1262.
9. Sultan Giram-gaz'i. Ascended the throne on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1262; abdicated on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1263.
10. Sultan Dil-gamis, brother of the preceding one, Reigned from 6<sup>th</sup> December 1263 to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1269.
11. Sultan Dil-marrah ibn Mal-zarrah. Ascended the throne on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1269; deposed and ran away in July-August 1278.
12. Sultan Dil-gamis, restored to the throne (of the ephemeral reign of the rebel 'Abdallah ibn Gangh) in May-June 1279.

The first entrance of the Walasma' of Ifât into Shewa on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1280.

The deposition of the Sultans of the Makhzumite Dynasty in Shewa in July-August 1285.



## 5. *THE AMHARIC CHANTS BY MUSLIM ABYSSINIANS*<sup>+</sup>

The unexpected and fortunate expansion of the Abyssinian Kingdom towards the West and South during the period 1883-1897, under the experienced leadership of Menelik II, extended Abyssinian dominion to wide regions inhabited by Muslims. Therefore, now, when one mentions the Abyssinian Muslims, one ought to distinguish various groups of diverse origins and formations who could be included under this name.

Above all, the Muslim communities existing in the old territory of the Abyssinian state: communities which by themselves had various origins, but, and even though, semiticized today at least linguistically, were, therefore, Amharic or Tigrigna speakers. They are known by the Abyssinians with the generic name of Jabarti<sup>1</sup> a name which, according to a more probable hypothesis, originally designated one single population, of the Muslim mini-state of Ifât, subsequently annexed by the kingdom of Abyssinia.

And after the terrible persecution - during the period of King John IV - against the Muslims of Wallo, the strongest group of these communities that remained was that of the region of Ifât to the North and to the East of Ankobar.

After the conquest of Harar (1887), this old Muslim state too became a part of Abyssinia together with its city-territory (of Semitic language) and its countryside populated by Muslim Oromo.

The western part of Ethiopia and the southern regions then

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<sup>+</sup> [*Rendiconti Della R. Accademia Nazionale Del Lincei*, series VI, II, 1926, pp. 433-4471.

(*la missione archeologica azais nell'Etiopia del sud, in Oriente moderno*, VII, 1927, pages 514-516), and the uncertainty has not been totally eliminated yet. However it is an absolutely daring fantasy that the last proposal presented by Ravaisse regarding the date of inscription IV 'from the year (or cycle) of Wakamba al-Mu'addib', whose personage and cycle would have otherwise been unknown. Nevertheless the two dated inscriptions (III and IV) bear the year 660 and, respectively, 675 *Hegira*, that is to say, just the period of time that our document is dealing with.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my review to von Tiling, *Die Sprache Der Dschabarti*, in *Oriente Moderno*, V, 1925, pp. 614-620.

pagan, were, - just during the last years prior to the Abyssinian conquest - a focus of active Muslim propagation which had already constituted strong nuclei and diffusion centres. Therefore, we have to consider the Oromo of Jimma Abba Jifar as one among new Muslim groups (now the main Muslim centre in these regions), followed by one part of the Oromo of Limmu and the one of Guma, the Sidama of Hadiya, the Tambaro, etc.

The populations of the coast are to be added - Danakil and the Somali - Muslims for a long period of time and who now entered, at least partially, the dominion under Abyssinia (Aussa, Ogaden, etc.).

Among the first Abyssinian Muslim group, that is to say the ones of the old Abyssinian State, none had been known enough about to this moment in Europe. Mittwoch has published some verses of the Koran in an Amharic version<sup>2</sup>, which, therefore, documented certain cultural activity conducted by these communities. Now I was able - during my stay in Ethiopia - to collect a series of chants made by these Muslims, chants in the Amharic language which attest to the formation of a small local Muslim literature with the hue of popular character. I personally believe that this manifestation of vitality from the part of old Abyssinia deserves to be recognized; that is why I am publishing some chants here, these various sorts of poetical stanzas, for instance.

As has been correctly expected, these chants are also interesting from a linguistical point of view, because, for all words regarding religious lives, the Arabic words are used in lieu of the Amharic ones; and that is for the sake of avoiding words used in Christian rites.

## I

Some chants refer to episodes of the life of the Prophet:

ይህን ሁሉ ሲያውቁ ያላህን ራህመት  
ሁሉን አሳውቆ አሳይቶዎት  
አህ ያላህ ስራ ሞት ላከብዎት

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<sup>2</sup> E. Mittwoch, *Experte Aus Dem Koran In Amharischer Sprache*, in *Msos*, IX, 1906, p. 111.

## አማክረዎት ላከው አልመጣም ቢድንገት

- 5                    እዝራኢል ተልኮ መጣ እኔታ ቤት  
                       እሰላም አሌክ ነቢና አልዎት  
                       መጥቸአለሁ አለ ያ መላክ እልሞት  
                       እንዲህ ተጫውቶት ነው የቀረበዎት  
                       ሃያት ተቀመሱ አይቀርም መሞት
- 10                   እዝራኢል መጣና ቢቆም እደጃቸው  
                       እንግዳ ነው አለች ፋጢማ ልጃቸው  
                       ወይ ፋጢማ ልጄ ምን እንግዳ ነው  
                       እዝራኢል ነው እንጅ  
                       የሚነጣጥለው አባትና ልጅ
- 15                   እባክህ እዝራኢል አንድ ጊዜ ተመለስ  
                       አኼ ጂብሪል ወንድም እስቲመጣ ድረስ  
                       አኼ ጂብሪል ወንድምሁ አሁን አለፍሁት  
                       መላይኮቹ ሁሉ ስብር እያሉት  
                       ሰይዲ ገባቸው ያ መላክ እልሞት

1. While He (the Prophet) had the knowledge of all (that is) the compassion of God;
2. (Which) He (God) made him know and revealed;
3. Ah! The deeds of God! Death sent He to him.
4. After having forewarned him He sent him to him; and surprise him he did not.
5. Ezra'il had been sent and come he did to the house of the Lord (the Prophet).
6. «Peace be upon you, oh Prophet, and upon your family,
7. Come I have!» said that angel of death.
8. So conversing did he accost him.
9. He who has tasted life, death on his threshold lies.
10. Ezra'il came and while waiting at his door-sill;

11. 'He is an alien', said Fatuma, his daughter.
12. 'Woe! Fatuma, daughter of mine, what alien do you think he is?
13. Instead Ezra'il he is.
14. Who puts asunder a parent from a son!'
15. Ezra'il, come back another time, pray!
16. Till my Brother in God Jibril comes!, just by Your own Brother have I passed now;
17. And all the angels kept on saying to him: 'Patience!'
18. Into my Lord (in the Prophet) entered that Angel of Death.

The Arabic words used frequently are worthy of note. *As-salam alek* (see 6) = السلام عليك *al* (see 6) = آل; *malak el-mot* (see 7) = ملك الموت; *hayat* (see 9) = حیات (the Amharic: *heywat*); *akhi* (see 16) = أخى; here the Amharic *wandem* has been added; *sayyidi* (see 19) = سيدى; *seber* (see 18) = اصبر.

'God' comes to be naturally translated as 'Allah' and not as Egzi'abher, who is the God of Christians. We also notice how the Prophet is indicated in line 5 as *geta* (lord), which is certainly the translation of 'sayyid' which is often used in the same Arabic language.

We notice that in lines 2, 3, 6 and 7 the suffix of third person (of respect) -*wot* instead of the common -*wo* (-*wot* is found to be used up to now especially in cases of composed verb tenses to avoid the hiatus, as for example in *Enagr-wot-allahu*).

## II

Other stanzas are found being dedicated to the praise of God or the Prophet in a method that the Somali Muslims actually call: *Nabi-Amman*. Let me give some examples here:

ምን ፍጥረት አለና አንቱ ያልረዳሁቱ  
 ኢብራሂምን ተሳት ልጁን ተስለቱ  
 ነቢ አላህ ሙሳ ተጣፍቶ ተናቱ

ነቢ ኣላህ ዩሱፍ ተተሸጠብቱ

- 5                      ነቢ ኣላህ ዩሱስ ተዋጠዎት ሁቱ  
ይህን ሁሉ ነጃው የሰሙ ሁርመቱ

1. Whoever is the creature to whom You (or God) have not given a helping hand?
2. Abraham (Ibrahim) from fire and his son from the blade:
3. The Prophet of God Moses (Musa) dispersed from his mother;
4. The Prophet of God Joseph (Yusuf) from where he was sold;
5. The Prophet of God Jonas (Yunis) from the whale which had swallowed him;
6. All these have been saved by the sacred name of His (of God).

Please note the Arabism here: Nabi-Allah (see 3.4 and 5) نبي الله (see 6) نَجًّا; *hurmatu* (see 6) ‘the sacred being’ evidently from the Arabic root حرم. The names of the prophets are naturally given according to the Arabic form and as they are used in the Abyssinian Christian Scriptures.

We ought to notice that God has been addressed as ‘You’ (*Antu*), a non-frequent constriction in Amharic during Christian prayers, and which is analogous construction to the one used in the preceding chant (see 17) in the direct discourse of Angel Ezra’il when he talked to the Prophet Muhammed.

### III

ምን ይሆነኝ ዘመድ ምን ይሆነኝ ጎሳ  
ሳለህልኝ አንተ ኸልቀህ እማትረሳ፡፡

1. Why should I care about my relatives, why should I care about my tribe,
2. When You are beside me, You (oh God), Who, having created me, would not forget (Your own creatures)!

In the second verse the verb ኸለቀ has been used to mean ‘creating’ (خلق) in the place of the usual *fattara*, which is used by the Christians.

## IV

ሰይድና ረሱል ስምህ መጣፈጡ  
 ወተት እንደ ጠጡ ማር እንዳላመጡ  
 የማርስ ጥፍጥና እከንፈር ይቀራል  
 ሰይዲ ያንተ ስም ሆኖ ይበረብራል

1. Our Lord Prophet, how gracious is Your name,
2. As if we had drunk milk, and as if we had tasted and enjoyed the relish of honey.
3. The taste of honey remains still on lips,
4. Oh Lord, Your name deep into the heart it goes.

In the first verse the Arabic words have been used *Sayyidna Rasul* سيدنا رسول and in the fourth the words *Sayyidi* = سيدى. አላመጣ (Guidi, *Vocabolario Amarico*, p. 19: ‘to chew’) has been explained by my informant as having the meaning of ‘swallowing something well chewed and minced’, almost in-between ‘chewing’ and ‘drinking’.

## V

Other chants allude to the details of the Muslim faith; such as, for example, the following stanzas on the bliss of Paradise:

እንዲት ዛፍ አለች ጡባ የሚሉዋት  
 ጥላዋ የሚያስከደው አንድ ሺ ዓመት  
 ያውም በበቅሎ ነው ቡራቅ በሚሉት  
 ለየኔታ ራሱል ነገ የሚሰጡት

- 5 እንዲህ ያለ ጥላ አለ በጆነት  
 ሁረአልአይኒ ናቸው የሚያገቡዋት ምሽት  
 እጅግ ይጠቅመናል ጌታ በጆነት

## አጥርተን ብንቆም ለሉ ሳንታከት

1. There is a tree called *tuba*,
2. Whose shade is one thousand years away,
3. And this (journey) is by a mule called ‘*Buraq*’
4. Tomorrow that would be given to Our Lord the Prophet.
5. Such a shade in Paradise there is.
6. With women of splendid eyes would You be betrothed.
7. Of a great help would be the Lord in Paradise,
8. If in purity we stay and without any negligence toward Him we remain.

The fourth line is not very clear, unless this poetry had been recited on the occasion of ليلة المعراج. Regarding the *tuba* tree and the mount on the back of al-Buraq cf. my *Libro Della Scala E La Questione Delle Fonti Arabo-Spagnole Della Divina Commedia*, the Vatican City 1949, pp. 42-43 and 122-123].

## VI

Other poems contain Muslim moral precepts. As in the following strophes:

አሙኝና ልማ በደሉኝ ልበድል  
ይኸን አይደለም ወይ ኢማን የሚያጎድል  
ተከፉ ጎረቤት አርቀው ይሸሹዋል  
ያንን ሲከተሉ ኢማን ይበላሻል

1. «They back bitten me have, backbite (them) I shall; wronged me they have, so wrong them I shall».
2. Is it not this that renders faith incomplete?
3. A bad neighbour one keeps at bay, from him one runs away;
4. He that follows him will have blemished his faith at will.

We notice Iman إيمان in lines 2 and 4; and the plural of verbs (see 3, 4) in them impersonal. So line 4 has the verb ተበላሸ ‘being ruined’, the

denominative formed from the vulgar Arabic *bilashi* vane, useless.

## VII

Here then we have a singular example of a religious chant:

- ይወዱኝ ይመስል አለበሱኝ ሻሽ  
በቀብር ጨለማ ብቻዬን ሳመሽ  
እኔ ዘመዶቼ ያበጁልኝ ቤት  
የደንጊያ ግድግዳ ያፈር ከፍከፋት
- 5            ያላህ መልክተኛ እዝራኢል ተመጣ  
እንኳን እህልና ውኃም አያስጠጣ  
ያላህ መልክተኛ እዝራኢል ጨካኙ  
ሞት አይቀርም አሉ ምንም ቢያመካኙ  
የቀብር ግድግዳ ቢመታው ደረቴን
- 10           ያን ግዜ አወቅሁት ተሰው መለየቴን  
እዝራኢልም ታዘክል ነፍሱን ለማውጣት  
ለቁጫጭም ቢሆን ስበብ አርጎላት  
ዛሬ የሰደቀ ነፍሱን አሸንፎ  
እልፍኙን ይወጣል አዳራሹን አልፎ
- 15           ሰማይ ሁሉ ኮከብ አድማቂው ጨረቃ  
ለኔ ታንቱ በቀር የለኝም ጠበቃ  
በቀብር ቀብረውኝ አፈር ሲመልሱ  
ምንኛ ደስ አለኝ መሀመድ ቢደርሱ  
በላሁ ጠጣሁና ተኛሁ እንደ በሬ
- 20           አልሰማሁ ይመስል የቀብርን ወሬ  
በላሁ ጠጣሁና ተኛሁ እንደ ጥጃ  
አልሰማሁ ይመስል የሲራጥ መውጫ  
ኡዱንያ ዘጠኝ ናት አትሞላም አስር  
በሁሌም ይሞታል እስከዋን እሱሞን ሲል



- 25 እንኳን ባስርና ቢጠመድ በሃያ  
 ሳይፈታም አይቀር ቤትና ገብያ  
 ሰላት ታልሰገዱ ኢማን አለመዱ  
 አዛብ ይሄዳሉ እንደ ላም ሲነዱ  
 በሰንሰለት አስሮ በአዛብ ሲጣል
- 30 እናትም ወንድምም ሹምም አያስጥል  
 ሰላት ሲገድ ቢሉህ ለነፍስህ እንጂ ነው  
 ላይሻረው ጌታ ላላህ ምን ይሆነው  
 እኒህ የሞቱ ሰዎች እንደኛ ሰው ናቸው  
 ግራርና ሰርዶ የበቀለባቸው
- 35 እኒህ የሞቱ ሰዎች እንደኛ ነበሩ  
 ባፈር በትብያ ሳይቀላቀሉ  
 ቀብሬማ ምን ይበል ነጭ ጤፍ አብቃዩ  
 አመሌ ነው እንጂ አላስተኛም ባዩ  
 ቀብር ቀብር አሉ ቀብር ምን አለበት
- 40 መልካም ስራ ሰርተው መጥተው ቢተኙበት  
 አላህንም ፍሩ ነቢን ምፍሩ  
 የቅያማ ዕለት አለና ማፈሩ  
 በዳይ አይሙት እንጂ ተበዳይ ምን ሁኖ  
 ነገ ይከፍለዋል መንምኖ መንምኖ
- 45 ዘፈን አትዝፈኑ ተውሂድ መቅራት ነው  
 የሰላም ልጅ ዘፈኑ ተውሂድ መቅራት ነው  
 እሰላም አለይኩም መሀምድ አለቃው  
 የጂብሪል ባለሟል ያላህ የኑር እቃው፡፡

1. As if I were dear to them, they shrouded me in muslin,
2. While I spend my night alone in the darkness of the tomb.
3. The house that my relatives have prepared for me,

4. Has stone walls, an opening of earth!
5. The Envoy of God, Ezra'il, when he comes
6. Let alone food, he would not even water let you drink.
7. The Envoy of God, Ezra'il, the cruel!
8. Nobody escapes death, no matter how many excuses one heaps!
9. When the wall of the tomb hit my chest,
10. Then I knew to have been separated from man.
11. Ezra'il has been ordered to extract souls (from bodies);
12. Even to an ant he gives a cause (for death).
13. Only today whoever saved his soul;
14. Will he (now) pass through the internal rooms having crossed the hall,
15. The sky abounds with stars, but the thing that makes twinkle is the moon!
16. I do not have a patron but You (oh Prophet)!
17. They have interred me in a tomb, covered me with earth;
18. What joy I had when Muhammed came!
19. I ate, drank and went into a slumber like an ox;
20. As if I had not heard of anything called a tomb!
21. I ate, I drank and went into a slumber like a cow;
22. As if I had not heard about the (difficult) exit of as-Sirat!
23. The world is nine and never completes ten;
24. He dies in his dream having a craving for her,
25. If instead of ten they come to be coupled by twenty,
26. Scattered will they be, the market and the house!
27. If one does not say one's prayers, one shall not learn faith,
28. And one shall go to Hell, driven as a cow would!
29. When He chains and throws one in Hell,
30. Neither a mother, nor a brother, nor a chief could be of help (to the condemned)!
31. When you are told 'say the prayers!' it is only for your own soul;

32. What does God care, our Lord, who would not be removed?
33. These dead are men just like us,
34. On whom acacia and weed now grow.
35. These dead were just like us,
36. Before they mingled with earth and dust.
37. My own tomb! What should I care about it, the one that grows a white cereal?
38. They are really my vices that do not let me remain in peace (now)!
39. 'The tomb! The tomb' they say; what is so (wrong) about a tomb?
40. If one does good deeds (in life) and comes here to lie down!
41. Fear God, fear the Prophet,
42. On the Day of Reckoning shame shall come indeed!
43. The offender shall not die (that is: he has the terror of dying) and the offended what does he have to fear?
44. Tomorrow shall he pay (the offence) being dwarfed, dwarfed,
45. Do not sing songs, but recite the *tawhid*!
46. 'Cause the son of peace's song, the perusal of *tawhid* is.
47. «Peace be upon You, oh Muhammed, You the Chief»;
48. «Oh (Prophet) the Companion of Gabriel (the Archangel), the shining jewel of God»!

This chant was written by a dead person personally. We notice that the conclusion reminds us very much of the traditional and popular chants of Arabia.

The imperfect *yimaseḥ* has been used in lines 1, 20 and 21 almost with the value of a simple conjunction 'as'. In the same line 1 ይወደኝ 'he loves me' has been used in the sense of 'is dear to me', also an unusual construction. Line 1 alludes to the burial sheet which shrouds the deceased human body.

Lines 13 -14 seem to have the sense of: «Ezra'il, after having had separated a great deal of souls from their bodies, entered Paradise triumphantly». Line 22 alludes to the Bridge (As-Sirat) which is stretched on flames that a Muslim has to cross after death prior to entering Paradise. Lines 23-26 allude to the mortal nature of worldly gains: women, riches, houses or trade.

አደመቀ which is in line 15 has used *nomen agentis*, in the sense of 'to make shine, to make twinkle' and has not been recorded in Guidi's *Vocabolario*, which however cites D'Abbadie who believed that fen had the value of 'twinkle'. In line 12 ቁጫጭ has been used in place of the common ቁንጫጭት 'ant'. Arabisms are noticed: *sebab* (line 12) سبب; *saddaqa* (line 13) صدق; *sirat* (line 22) صراط; *addunya* (line 23) الدنيا; *helem* (line 24) حلم; *salat* (line 27) صلاة; *iman* (line 27) إيمان; *azab* (line 28) عذاب; *qeyama* (line 42) قيامة; *tawhid* (line 45, 46) توحيد; the verb *qarra*, in which the infinitive has been used in lines 45 and 46 is the Arabic قرأ; *Nur* (line 48) نور. And then *qabr* قبر, has been used in all these chants instead of መቃብር.

This short Muslim literature, therefore, has its own characteristics, be they content or language wise. It is obvious that one has to bear in mind that during very recent times the contact of Abyssinia with foreign countries, and thence for commercial reasons with the Muslims of Arabia and India, must have contributed in retaining and extending this activity conducted by old Muslim groups who were isolated in Christian Abyssinia.

**6.    *MEDIEVAL ETHIOPIA IN SOME EXCERPTS  
FROM ARAB WRITERS\****

**SUMMARY:**

1. An Enemy Queen of Abyssinia during X century A. D. according to ibn Hawqal.
2. A certain Yemenite man of pen and jurist in Ethiopia during 1249-1255.
3. The rebellion of the head of the Sahart against Negus Yekuno Amlak.
4. A certain Muslim Shewan prince and a Yemenite tentative at Zaila' in the second half of the XIII century.
5. The Muslim agitator Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah and his fight with Negus Wedem Ra'ad.
6. The Kingdom of Damot, the Sultanate of Ifât and Christian Abyssinia, according to ibn Khaldun,
7. The genealogy of the Walasma' Sultans of Ifât.
8. Three Muslim Ethiopians in Yemen in the XIV century.
9. An Ethiopian embassy in Yemen in 1369, according to al-Khazraji.
10. A Yemenite influence at Zaila' at the end of XIV century.
11. Negus Dawit I's embassy in Cairo in 1387.
12. The maltreatment of the Ethiopian Muslims during a certain event that took place in 1419.
13. The death date of Negus Yeshaq.
14. An Ifât embassy In Cairo in 1452.

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<sup>o</sup> [Rassegna Di Studi Etiopici, III, 1943, pp. 272-294].

## § 1 An Enemy Queen of Abyssinia During The X Century AD According To ibn Hawqal

When during the X century the geographical science of the Muslim world had passed from its first phase of Ptolemy's remaking to a direct collection of new data for itineraries often and effectively frequented on land, the Persian Abu Zayd Ahmed al-Balkhi<sup>1</sup> drew, circa 920-921. a geographical piece of work, which we have failed to trace today. al-Balkhi's piece of work was readapted and published by al-Istakhri in his second design, while al-Balhl was still alive, during the year 930-933. At a later date, a third geographer and-traveller ibn Hawqal left Baghdad on 15<sup>th</sup> May 943 for a long journey. After having met with al-Istakhri, seemingly in 951, he was invited to correct some papers regarding geographical works of that very person. As a result of this invitation and owing to subsequent studies and research made by ibn Hawqal, there was discovered a third piece of work which, though being initiated from that of al-Balkhi in the first place, added further information furnished by al-Istakhri and by ibn Hawqal: it was the 'Book of the Face of the Earth' (*Kitab Surat al-Ardh*) or the 'Book of Routes and Kingdoms' (*Kitab al-Masalik Wal-Mamalik*), the piece of work ibn Hawqal completed in 977-978 AD.

Ibn Hawqal's book was already been published by De Goeje according to the codices of the Leida and Bodleiana libraries. Recently, the exploration of treasures contained in the libraries of Constantinople revealed a much older manuscript (Seray 3346), and J. H. Kramers had it

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<sup>1</sup> The question of relationships among the three geographers, al-Balkhi, al-Istakhri and ibn Hawqal, had first been examined in a fundamental article by M. De Goeje (*Die Istakhri-Balkhi Frage*, in *Zdmg*, XXV, 1871, pp. 42-58). A further research has been summarized now in C. Brockelmann's. *Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur: Erster Supplementb and*, Leida 1937. p. 408; and in V. V. Barthold's *Hudud al-'Alam, The Regions of The World, A Persian Geography*, 372 A.H. - 982 AD, translated and examined by Y V. Minorsky, with the preface by V.V. Barthold translated from the Russian, Oxford 1937, pp. 15-23.

published in 1939. Among the *novelties* of this precious manuscript of ibn Hawqal, which has not been yet studied because Kramers was not able to publish the translation, in both indices of his two volumes lie information about Abyssinia, which is absolutely important.

So ibn Hawqal says:<sup>2</sup>

«Regarding Abyssinia, it has a woman of many years as Queen. This woman is the one who killed the king of Abyssinia who was known by the title of Hadhani. She still continues to dominate his country and the regions neighbouring the lands of the Hadhani in the internal part of Abyssinia to this date. It is a vast country, boundless, but the deserts and solitudes render it difficult to reach».

This passage from ibn Hawqal has great historical importance. It was known that towards the close of the X century, Abyssinia had already been devastated by the troops of a certain Enemy Queen, while the King of Abyssinia, convinced this was divine wrath, wrote to King George of Nubia imploring him to use his good offices in Cairo so that the Patriarch would send a new Metropolitan to Abyssinia.<sup>3</sup> However, up to this date, the only evidence we have had regarding these events was the History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria.<sup>4</sup> This evidence has been so confirmed and completed by ibn Hawqal, a contemporary of these events, and who referred to collected pieces of information within pin-pointed

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<sup>2</sup> *Opus Gographicum Auctore ibn Hawqal Secundum Textum Et Imagines Codicis Constantinopolitani Conserv Ati In Biblioteca Antiqui Palatii N. 3346 Cui Titulus Est Liber Imaginis Terrae*. Ed. by J. H. Kramers, Leida 1939, Vol. I, p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> It refers to King George II of Nubia, who was already reigning in 969 AD Cf. U. Monneret De Villard, *Storia Della Nubia Cristiana*, Rome 1938 (*Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, No. 118), pp. 123-127.

<sup>4</sup> Re the passage of the History of Patriarchs Cf. E. Renaudot, *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum Jacobitarum*, Paris 1713. pp. 381-383. The episode, also based on the manuscripts of the Vatican on the History of Patriarchs, had been discussed for a long time by Ignazio Guidi, *Due Notizie Storiche Sull'abissinia*, in *Gsai*, 1889, pp. 176-179; by J. Halevy, *Remarques Touchant La Persecution De Nedjan: Appendice*, in *Rev. Et Juives*, XXI, 1890, pp. 77-79; by J. Perruchon, *Notes Pour Lihistoire Diethiopie*, in *Revue Semitique*, I. 1893, pp. 71-76; by Conti Rossini, *Appunti Ed Osservazioni Sui Re Zague*, in *RRAL*, se, mor., ser. V. Vol. IV, 1895, p. 359; *Note Etiopiche*: II, *Sovra Una Tradizione Bilin*, in *GSAI*, 1897, pp. 153-156. *Aethiopica* (II Series). in *RSO*, X, 1925, pp. 500-501; and *Storia D' Etiopia*, Vol. I, Rome, 1928. pp. 285-287.

chronological limits, prior to 978 AD.

There arises, above all, further precise information within the chronology regarding the battle between the Queen and Abyssinia. The letter sent to King George of Nubia pertaining to events in Abyssinia, which we have touched upon, reached Cairo - according to the History of Patriarchs - during the Patriarchate of Philotheus (979-1003 AD.). But as far as we know now from ibn Hawqal, it referred to events which were already going on for some years. It was said that the letter mentioned that the Queen was still threatening Abyssinia; and on the other hand it also hinted at the death of the Abyssinian monarch, a serious event his successor kept silent about it. The letter sent to George the king of Nubia was, therefore, probably written by the same king of Abyssinia, who thereafter fell in battle with the Enemy Queen; and was written prior to 978 AD, the date of ibn Hawqal's piece of work. On the other hand the History of Patriarchs noted that, after sending the new Metropolitan Daniel, who was nominated by Patriarch Philotheus to Abyssinia (therefore, post 979), the threat of this queen against Abyssinia halted. From these globally seen facts, one can now date the battle of this queen against Abyssinia at about a ten-year-period, from 970 to 980 AD.

In addition to the hitherto data, ibn Hawqal recorded that the king of Abyssinia died in combat against this Enemy Queen. She thus, only vaguely and circumstantially hinted at by Sinassaros<sup>5</sup> and by some Ethiopian tradition, assumed the character of historical fact; and this passage by the Arab writer of the X century came once more to confirm the incredible power of the oral tradition.

But the most important matter for Ethiopian scholars is the indication made by ibn Hawqal that in his own time the title of the King of Abyssinia was Hadhani. As a matter of fact, in Ethiopia, we find this title

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn Hawqal thus confirms the Ethiopian Sinasearius, by giving a certain value to the letter sent by the Ethiopian monarch to George of Nubia ወጥቱ አጲስ ቆጵላቲነ ወከህናትነ መንግሥትነ «Our Archbishops, priests and the King are dead» (Cf. Budge's as well, The Book of The Saints of The Ethiopian Church, Cambridge 1928. Vol. I. p. 234). That phrase, we ought to note, is not to be found in the Arabic text of the *History of Patriarchs*.



referring to two monarchs. Above all to Hadhani (ሐዳኒ) Daniel in three inscriptions at Axum, whose datings and readings are very uncertain.<sup>6</sup> These inscriptions, which Littmann said were carved between 700 and 1100 AD, are of a Sovereign who reigned in Axum (which in fact he calls *Behera Mangesteya* ‘land of my reign’, and who fruitfully raided his neighbours, and listed down the booties gained. In one of them, assumed by Littmann, there is a hint about a battle which ended without any bloodshed, with another Abyssinian Sovereign, from whom Daniel would have tried to render himself independent. Regarding such an interpretative hypothesis it might be as well to remember that ibn Hawqal proved that, at the close of the X century, Hadhani was the title of the supreme Sovereign of Abyssinia; and therefore, still keeping the thesis of internal wars in Daniel’s time, one should also assume that this individual could have had usurped the power as well as the supreme title of the King of Abyssinia.<sup>7</sup>

A very long time after, in two (Ethiopic) feudal Acts of the XIII century in favour of the Convent of Dabra Libanos of Shimenzana, the Ethiopian Sovereign, Lalibala, was found designated with the title of Hadhani.<sup>8</sup> This title therefore, is not, as much as it appears to be, a rarity, but was now documented starting from ibn Hawqal to the Act of Lalibala, used from the X to the XIII century, just like the Ethiopian Monarch.

This fact also clarifies, as far as my own belief goes, the

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<sup>6</sup> *Deutsche Aksum Expedition*: Vol. IV, pp. 42-48. *Sabaische, Griechische Und Altabessinische Inschriften* Edited by Enno Littmann, Berlin 1913.

<sup>7</sup> The interpretation of Littmann of the inscription of Aksum 14 is conjectural, as I have said in the text. I even start to doubt if the first lines are to read as follows:

ወመፀ ሕዝብ ወፈተወ  
ያንሲስኒ እንዘ ሀሎኩ በ  
አከሱም ዘከመ ግእዝ  
አበዊነ በቅድሚያ

«And the people came and wished that I was to be crowned, while I was in Aksum, according to the custom of our forefathers before me». This would remove the impasse of that ያንሲስኒ intended by Littmann «und wollte er auch herrschen», a little bit contrary to the flair of the Ethiopic language, I must say. But how do we then understand the second part of the inscription?

<sup>8</sup> Conti Rossini, *L'evangelo D'oro Di Dabra Libanos*, in RRAL, sc. mor., ser. V, Vol. X, 1901 p. 14.

etymology of the title. Hadhani, in common parlance, is: ‘tutor’, and has already been used in one passage of the Bible (II Paralipomenon, XXII, 4) in correspondence to εὐμβολος of the Seventies, ‘*consiliarius*’ [sc. Regis] of the Volgata. On the other hand, the semantic phrase from material cure to religious and political meanings has been certainly proven to us through the name *madhan* (or *mahdhant*) «*quidquid tutelae, custodiae, fedei alicuius comittitur, tam de rebus quam de personis*», whose very common denominative *Tamahdhana* «*in clientelam se committere etc.*» whose *nomen agentis* Mamehdhan has the value of ‘patronus, protector’. The history of the regal title Hadhani, therefore, probably sounds like that of Nagash (Negus), in the sense that both were titles borne by local princes first, followed by the ascent of those who bore it, till their arrival at the supreme office held by a monarch and in the Ethiopian conservative tradition, both titles have been handed down to our own times, though their usage being slightly different.

Actually, this same tradition, for three centuries at least, of the assumption of the title of Hadhani is evidence of a link between that title and the title of Hadhe (ሐድ), and Atse in our modern pronunciation, still borne by Ethiopian Sovereigns to this very day. And linguistically speaking, the phenomenon of the palatization of the last syllable is (-ANI> - AN> -AY> -E), under the influence of the final I, does not render any difficulty. So when we touched upon this title the linguistical side as well would be interesting to us, because it constitutes an indication for dating the variations undergone by the pronunciation of emphatic consonants in the Ethiopic languages, Let us summarise these facts:

a) X century: ibn Hawqal transcribes the Ethiopian title ḁḁḁ with the Arabic حضاني Hadhani. The Ethiopic consonant, therefore, comes to be pronounced still as *dh* or, at least, in an analogous way to the Arabic *dh*.

b) XIV century: During the first half of this same century, the Arab writers such as al-Mufaddhal and al-'Umar transcribe the Ethiopian title as حطى, Hatsi. And this transcription, therefore, proves that the Ethiopians pronounced it as in the word ḁḁ?, Ts to stand for *dh*, just like

today. And historically, considering the dearth of old Ethiopic documents, al-Mufaddhal<sup>9</sup> (who wrote in 1358) and al-'Umari<sup>10</sup> (who wrote between 1342 and 1349) are thus the very first to attest to the Hatse form borne by the Ethiopian monarchs.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. hereunder on § 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Fadl Allah al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, edited by Gaudefroy Demombynes, Paris 1927, p. 24.

## § 2 A Yemenite Man of Pen And Jurist In Ethiopia During 1249-1255

The History of the Rasuli Dynasty of Yemen by Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn Wahhas al-Nazragi, written during the dawn of the XV century, contains this passage<sup>11</sup> beneficial to Ethiopian Islam. It can be located under the date 652 *Hegira* (21<sup>st</sup> February 1254-9 February 1255).

«There died in that same year Shaykh, Imam Abu 'r-Rabi' Sulayman ibn Musa ibn Sulayman ibn 'Ali ibn al-Jawn al-Ash'ari, the Hanafite jurist. He was a distinguished jurist a savant of rights, of no equal in grammatical studies and second to none in language studies and literature. He was the author of notable literary works, among which 'Comment on *Khumartashiyyah*', and an excellent comment which he entitled, 'The Gardens of Literature'. It has been said that he wrote it when he was 18 years old. He was a man who did lawful things and abstained from the illicit. So, when the traditional 'Sabatis'<sup>12</sup> started to appear at Zabid and illegalities started to be committed, he emigrated to Ethiopia and remained there till his death in the aforementioned year, in a country called Run, with the vowel U after the initial R.

The piece of information given by al-Khazraji is, therefore, important when looked at from different points of view. The jurist (Faqih) and the Yemenite man of pen Abu 'r-Rabi' Sulayman moved to Muslim Ethiopia. It actually seems obvious that when we talk about Ethiopia we should rather understand that it meant the Muslim countries of the South,

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<sup>11</sup> El-Khazraji's *History of The Resuli Dynasty of Yemen. Text*, Vol. I. London 19139 p. 119. We notice that this passage has been omitted in Sir James Redhouse's translation, published previously. The non-completed translation much more than one used to think - as has been noted by Edward G. Browne in his preface of the cited volume I of the text (p. XI) - does not dispense with a research of the text subsequently edited by Muhammed 'Asal (in the same *Gibb Memorial Series*).

<sup>12</sup> Re *Sabatis* or Sabatis of the Palms' of Zabid, the traditional festivities during the ripening of dates Cf. El-Khazraji, cit., Works, Vol. III, p. 186. No. 1316; and ibn Battutah, *Voyages*, ed - by Defremery-Sanguinetti, Paris 1877, Vol. II, pp. 167-168. These '*Sabatifestivities*' seem not to have had been well accepted by strict Muslims.

where it was natural for a Yemeni to go to, instead of Christian Abyssinia during the last period of Zague's reign, which on the other hand was confined to the internal part of the highland. The date of the Yemenite jurist's arrival cannot be determined without difficulty, because al-Khazraji, as has been seen, relates it to the 'illicit' events of Zabid, that is to say with the fight between the prince (later Sultan) al-Muzaffar Yusuf and the killers of his father in 647 *Hegira* (1249-1250 AD). That is why Abu'r-Rabi' Sulayman had to stay in Ethiopia for about five or six years, from 1249 to 1255.

Abu'r-Rabi' Sulayman, says al-Khazraji, was the author of a commentary to *Khumartashiyah*: that is to *Qasidah* by the Sufi Yemenite poet Abul-Hasan Ahmed ibn Khumartash who lived during the middle of the XII century AD.<sup>13</sup> News about al-Khazraji, it is noticed, was cited in a resume at a later date by as-Suyuti.<sup>14</sup> This commentary by Abu'r-Rabi' Sulayman, the jurist émigré to Ethiopia, can be read in a manuscript of Leida (the Arabic 702) which has not yet been published and about which De Goeje and Houtsma say that '*continet scitu dignissima ad historiam veram et fabulosam Jamanensium illustrandam*'.<sup>15</sup>

This passage made by the Yemenite jurist proved how cultural contacts with Arab countries were maintained by Muslim Ethiopia; and the internal disagreements in Arabia reached the other shore as well as to a scholar savant, like Abu'r-Rabi' Sulayman. This happened in a period like 1249-1255 AD. The Muslim Sultanate of Shewa then was in a favourable situation in Ethiopia, whose Chronicle, particularly from 1231 to 1289 AD, I have published a fragment only here above. Therefore, I started to mark how that text had cited a *Qadi al-Qudah* of Shewa called Faqih

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur*, Weimar 1898. Vol. I. p. 25.9; and *Erster Supplement-Band*, Leida 1939, p. 460.

<sup>14</sup> *Kitab Bugyat al-Wu'ah*, Cairo 1326. p. 264. As - *Suy Uui* omits the name of the Ethiopian country, Run, cited by al-Khazraji. Besides, he reproduces al-Khazraji verbatim and quotes him many a time and oft.

<sup>15</sup> M. J. De Goeje and M. Th. Houtsma, *Catalogus Codicum 'Arabicorum Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae*, Meida 1888, Vol. I. p. 436.

Ibrahim ibn al-Hassan, who died on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1255; and lets us expect a lofty cultural degree and a sound juridical organization enjoyed by the Muslim Shewa.<sup>16</sup> And the passage of al-Khazraji regarding Abu'r-Rabi' confirms that cultural state and at the same time indicates the path of its provenance.

The fact that the Yemenite jurist, after having emigrated to Ethiopia, adhered to Hanafi rite cannot be ignored. He had another opportunity of underlining how the Arab sources of the XIV century (ad-Dimashqi; al-'Umari) hinted at the presence of Shafi'tes at Berbera and Ifât, while, according to al-'Umari, the other Ethiopian Muslim states, further inland, were Hanafites.<sup>17</sup> In this situation as well, the presence of Arab jurists must have had an influence just as the one documented here above.

Abu'r-Rabi' Sulayman, according to al-Khazraji, lived at Run in Ethiopia. The reading of this name, at least of the two initial letters, seems to be assured by the description of the vocalization, which has been made in full in al-Khazraji's text itself, as seen above. But where ever was this country called Run to be located? It is another name to be kept in abeyance awaiting new documents, together with other lists of Ethiopian place-names which are crying out for precise data to pin-point uncertain locations hitherto, which we have about the medieval toponymy of those regions.

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<sup>16</sup> *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa Nel Secolo XIII Secondo Un Nuovo Documento Storico*, here above, p. 224.

<sup>17</sup> *Studi Etiopici*, Vol. I: *Lalingua E La Storia Di Harar*. See further on p. 317-318.

### § 3 The Rebellion of The Head of The Sahart Against

#### Negus Yekuno Amlak

The Coptic Chronicler, al-Mufaddhal ibn Abi'l-Fadha'il, wrote the annals of his country, Egypt, in continuation of the ones of al-Makin's works which went from 1260 to 1349, completed by him on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1358. Therefore, he was a contemporary of the main part of events which he narrated. The annals of al-Mufaddhal, though written in a plain style, are not devoid of interest; particularly regarding information, he accurately noted what was afoot in Egypt regarding events in progress in the Middle East countries. A certain passage of al-Mufaddhal gives information about Ethiopia during the XIV century. Here is the translation:

«Regarding Amhara, it is the Abyssinian climate that is the main one; and its lord reigns on most parts of Abyssinia, such as the countries of Damot and Harla. The lord of the Amhara country is named *Hatse* which is tantamount to saying the Caliph. Whoever reigns (Ethiopia) has this title.

Among the kings of Abyssinia there was a certain Yusuf ibn Arsamayah, who was the lord of Gidaya, Shewa, Qalgur and the surrounding areas; they are a nation ruled by Muslim kings.

Regarding Zaila' and its tribes they are seven and all are Muslims. The *Khutbah* comes to be recited on behalf of the heads of the seven tribes. The lord of Yemen sent his party there to build a mosque within their surroundings so that they might recite *Khutbah* in his name. He sent the building materials from 'Aden together with all other implements, but some tribes at Zaila' picked up the stones and threw them into the sea. So the lord of Yemen kept (as a vengeance) their ships in 'Aden for the whole year.

Whoever makes for Amhara is supposed to leave the town of 'Awan, which is on the shore of the Abyssinian country. The troops of the Abyssinian king are many. The king dominates most Abyssinian kings.

And this very king had already prepared his message to the Sultan (of Egypt) al-Malik az-Zahir by means of an embassy, which had presents and gifts, among which there were lions as black as night. The ambassador reached the land of Sahart; but the prince of that land rebelled against him, seized the envoys and took hold of all they had». <sup>18</sup>

Let us examine the importance of this complex of information in particular. Regarding Christian Ethiopia al-Mufaddhal repeats that it is under the sovereignty of the ‘Lord of the Amhara’. new confirmation of what we have already said about the regional aspect which, for contemporaries, had the new Solomonic Dynasty. The ‘Lord of the Amhara’, who has the title of *Hatse* (that is why I refer to what I have profusely written above), dominates the other Ethiopian princes: this could be an allusion as much to Ethiopian feudalism as to the prevalence that the Negus was able to affirm on some Muslim states of the south during the XIV century.

Historically, al-Mufaddhal documents a new episode. The head of the Tigray region of Sahart rebels against the Negus; he rather seizes and keeps the ambassador whom the Negus sent to Egypt with credentials to the Sultan, in his province. There was a sovereign in Egypt then, says al-Mufaddhal, Sultan al-Malik az-Zahir: Baybars, who sat on the Egyptian throne from 1260 to 1277 AD. This chronological reference reveals that the rebellion of the head of Sahart was really directed against Negus Yekuno Amlak (1270-1285), the first Solomonic Monarch. So the information passed by al-Mufaddhal confirms how the movement which, after having left the central-southern regions of Ethiopia and brought the new Solomonic Dynasty on the throne of the king, was not without reactions stirred up in Tigray.

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<sup>18</sup> PATR. OR., XIV, pp. 386-3870 Re-translated from the text edited by Blochet.



**§ 4    A Certain Shewan Muslim Prince's And A  
Yemenite's Tentative Bluff At Zaila'  
During The Second Half of The XIII Century**

The information supplied by al-Mufaddhal on the Ethiopian Muslim countries are equally new. We do have the name of a certain prince, Yusuf ibn Arsamayah who reigned: Shewa (hence the Muslim Shewa, or else what remained from Muslim Shewa after the fall of the sultans of the Makhzumite Dynasty in 1285 AD); Gidaya, a district which was a part of Muslim Shewa, as touched upon elsewhere<sup>19</sup> and Qalgur. This last place-name might probably have to be identified with 'Kalgor' of the 'Chronicle of the Sultanate of Shewa' or 'Kalgora' of the Ethiopian documents, which was a neighbouring region of Shewa.<sup>20</sup> It is not possible, for now, to determine the epoch during which this Shewan Muslim prince Yusuf ibn Arsamayah could have reigned: whether he comes to be referred to the epoch of the errand of Yekuno Amlak to the Sultan Baybars (therefore, prior to 1277) or to the epoch of the episode where al-Mufaddhal inserts all this digression, that is 1290; or just simply to an undetermined epoch prior to 1358, the date he ended the compilation of his History. At any rate, we do know that Yusuf ibn Arsamaya lived during the last decade of the XIII or during the initial years of the XIV century.

Another interesting episode is the one which regards Zaila'. The region of Zaila' is inhabited, says al-Mufaddhal, by independent Muslim tribes. Therefore, the sovereignty of the Sultan of Ifât had not yet been affirmed in the region which happened later; pertaining to which we will find later in the Chronicle of Muslim Ethiopia and how the Emir of Zaila' often remained independent. But there is not a single word about the emir

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<sup>19</sup> *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa*, cit., here above, p. 229.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. here above, p. 230.

during the epoch of al-Mufaddhal, because, as has been attested by the Egyptian historian, there were only heads of tribes at Zaila' then. From the dearth of an effective Sovereign, al-Mufaddhal tells us, the Sultan of Yemen tried to benefit. Showing that he was only performing a pious deed, he builds, with building materials and means sent by him, a mosque at Zaila', where he tries to have his name mentioned during the recitation of Khutbah. It is known in the Islamic world that the recitation of Khutbah on Fridays in a mosque in the name of a determined sovereign means the recognition of his sovereignty on the country. So this prudent manoeuvre on the part of the sultan of Yemen, for the sake of affirming himself on the other shore of Africa, provoked the hostility of the inhabitants of Zaila', who presto have the works on the mosque interrupted and stick to their own independence even after the block of their sailing ships in 'Aden, decreed by the Yemenite. This was the typical experienced judgment of the true Ethiopian Muslim sentiments, who, though cherishing their relationships with other Muslim countries of the East, were, vis-à-vis those as well, extremely jealous about their own independence.

**§ 5      The Muslim Agitator Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah And His  
            Battle Against Negus Wedem Ra'ad**

Once more al-Mufaddhal says about Ethiopia:<sup>21</sup>

«It has also been narrated that in the year 698 (*Hegira*) a person called Shaykh Muhammed arose in the land of Abyssinia. He had the *Kunya* of Abu 'Abdallah, and many people unified themselves around him. He said to them that the Angels had kept on talking to him and had ordered him to conquer Abyssinia. Thus one hundred men organized themselves around him.

«Meanwhile, the Amhara lord of Abyssinia, was busy organizing all his troops, who were about forty thousand horsemen and infantry, and set out to meet Shaykh Abu 'Abdallah, Thereafter the Amhara began to contact the chiefs of Shaykh Muhammed secretly and bribed them with money.

«So the most senior among them went to the Shaykh, united themselves around him and addressed themselves to him saying: “We would like to have a demonstration of what your miraculous virtue asserts, so that our hearts get quietened and so that we might fight in front of you with aplomb and serenity”. He answered: “Yes! I will ask the Angels to talk to you”.

«After they had been dismissed, he ordered one of his relatives to go down into that well and to dig a room at the side where a person can hide, and if and when the chiefs should come back to him and he asked him: “Oh (Angel) Gabriel, is it me really?” the one (hidden in the well) should say yes.

When he ended this connivance of his, the Shaykh summoned his top officials who had requested a demonstration of his miraculous virtue for a meeting. The great meeting of his followers was now held. When

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<sup>21</sup> PATR. OR., XX, pp. 56-58,

they reached the well, the Shaykh precipitated toward the well and uttered: ‘Oh Angel of the Lord (or rather: Oh you Gabriel), is it me really?’ And the other answered him from the depth of the well,” Yes!” And then (from the inside of the well) he ordered him to do something, forbade him to do another thing and kept on talking to him for a long time, while the people were always there and listening. And, when he felt that hearts were appeased in his favour, he asked them: ‘So what do you say now?’ They answered: ‘Now your sincerity has manifested itself clearly to us’. He then reiterated his question: ‘Are you willing to do what I am going to order you?’ They answered affirmatively.

So he said:

I order you to fill this well immediately. They were all agog to do the job and in a couple of seconds the well was full to the level of the ground. The man who went down the well and had an avalanche of earth on him, had a brother. The latter noticed the long absence; and, having gone to the Shaykh, he asked him the whereabouts of his brother. He had already asked the relatives of the Shaykh before he met with the Shaykh personally and was told that the Shaykh had sent him on an errand. But when he asked the Shaykh, the latter denied sending him anywhere at all. But the other would not desist from detecting the traces of his brother till he succeeded in finding out who had been the one who answered the Shaykh from the depth of the well. Therefore, he made a bee-line for the well, together with a throng of people; they dug it and pulled out a dead man. So they were nauseated by the deed of the Shaykh and detached themselves from him. This was a manna for the Amhara, the lord of Abyssinia, who, before the occurrence of this event, had negotiated for six months from the other side of the Nile.

Then the Amhara began to correspond with the Shaykh and conceded to him some districts of Abyssinia as the lands where he (the Shaykh) and his family could live, given that they abstained from any activity whatsoever. The Lord of Abyssinia would fulfil all their needs and they would remain under his obedience. So they agreed to the terms of this pact.

The story of al-Mufaddhal, above all, refers to one period of Ethiopian history for which any other document was lacking. This fact was mentioned by the Coptic chronicler sub anno 700 *Hegira*, the date in which this news reached Egypt; but al-Mufaddhal knows that event occurred in Ethiopia during 698 *Hegira*, that is to say during the period from 9<sup>th</sup> October to 27<sup>th</sup> September 1299.

During those years Ethiopia was under the power of the sons of Yagbe'a Tsyon, five princes whose reign would last compulsively from 1294 to 1299, according to accepted chronology, and seem, at least partially, to have been contemporaneous.

Therefore, they were the years, as far as we can deduce from the record of five names during such a brief period of time, of internal discords. The new Solomonic Dynasty, in which Yagbe'a Tsyon was just the second sovereign of, had to deal with its first crisis. This crisis came to a close with the accession of Wedem Ra'ad to the throne exactly in 1299. I have reiterated these pieces of information because they, according to my own belief, assure the chronology of al-Mufaddhal's story. The Monarch of Ethiopia, who, in our own document, resists the threat of the Muslim agitator with shrewd and slow political action, cannot, therefore, be one of the princes of 1294-1299 who had an ephemeral and agitated kingdom. The chronological discrepancies between the Ethiopian documents and the Arab ones have already been pointed out in other cases; but to reach the point of attributing this fact to Negus Yagbe'a Tsyon, we will have to surmount a discrepancy of more than five years and without other evidence in hand. Therefore, it is much easier to accept the date mentioned by al-Mufaddhal and to attribute the events he has narrated about to Negus Wedem Ra'ad's reign, during the first year of his accession, in 1299. Let us present other circumstantial evidence here below.

The king of Ethiopia is called *al-Amhari*, the Amhara, by al-Mufaddhal. It is a meaningful name, because it confirms that the new Solomonic dynasty appears as stock of the Amhara region, in the eyes of the contemporary. Such a very thing had had certainly appeared in Ethiopia in comparison to the preceding Zague Dynasty, stock from the

region of Lasta.

Al-Mufaddhal as well, in the record of the ruling monarchs during 704 *Hegira* (=1304-1305 AD), repeats that the Lord of Abyssinia, of the Christian faith, was then called *al-Malik al-Amhari*, ‘the Amhara King’.

The antagonist of the Negus, in al-Mufaddhal's story, is the Muslim Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah. Unfortunately the document does not tell us about the region of his birth and where he carried out his undertakings. The hint at the negotiations between the Negus and the Muslim heads ‘on the side of the Nile’ is very vague. It could be the Blue Nile and its basin as well; so in this case the scene would be at the extreme end of Shewa, which and according to the fragment of the Chronicle I have published in another place, we know to have had still been Muslim during those years (Manz remained so up to 'Amda Tsyon I's reign, the one who had succeeded Wedem Ra'ad).<sup>22</sup> However, would the Coptic writer not have interpreted the hint at the Nile as being any of the Ethiopian rivers?

From the Ethiopian Chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon I, we come to learn, in the second part of that Negus's reign, about a Muslim agitator, Qadi Salih who emerged and succeeded in uniting the various princes of southern Ethiopia, of Islamic religion, in a league against Christian Abyssinia.<sup>23</sup> So we see from al-Mufaddhal's passage how some years earlier than Qadi Salih's, a certain older agitator, Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah, endeavoured to unite the forces of Ethiopian Muslims in a war against Christian Abyssinia, after having declared that he had been inspired by God to lead the Muslims to conquer the Negus's territory. This proves, on the other hand, Ethiopian Islam's vitality and force for noteworthy expansion in 1299; and which was probably not expected in such a brief time from the long series of internal wars lasting from 1234 to

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<sup>22</sup> *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa*, cit., here above, p. 227-228.

<sup>23</sup> *Histoires Des Guerres De 'Amda Tsyon* ed. by J. Perruchon, in *Journal Asiatique*, September-October 1889, pp. 318 and 358.

1289 which have been attested to having taken place in Muslim Shewa and in Ifât. But warlike peoples such as the Ethiopian highlanders were naturally goaded to demonstrate their alacrity in raids and in civil wars against that bellicose situation which the heads of larger and shrewder authorities, exploited instead of leading them against the main adversary: the infidels.

What exactly did happen in 1299 between Negus (Wedem Ra'ad) and Shaykh Muhammed Abu 'Abdallah? The Shaykh succeeded in uniting a force numerically superior to the one of the Negus (we should not forget that the one who narrates this is al-Mufaddhal, a Coptic chronicler). To stop this serious threat the Negus not only resorts to military operations, but rather takes good care of a direct political manoeuvre to dissolve the Muslim league, by separating the main leaders from the Shaykh. This action is a complete success (the picturesque episode of the well being the most popular representation); the defections from the Muslim camp are numerous. So the Negus crowns his political victory by offering the Shaykh, militarily enfeebled, good pacts, which are solidified by the recognition, from the part of the Shaykh, of the Negus's sovereignty and by the delimitation of a region the Negus recognizes from his part as assigned to the Shaykh and his followers. Such conduct, it seems to me, is very prudent and sensible from the Ethiopian monarch's part and it confirms indirectly with what I have said above regarding the trustworthiness of the date 1299 that was referred to by al-Mufaddhal; because the attitude of the Negus is so and could have been expected from a monarch like Wedem Ra'ad during his first year of reign and after five years of internal crises met by the new Solomonic State.

**§ 6      The Kingdom of Damot, The Sultanate of Ifât And Christian  
Abyssinia, According To ibn Khaldun**

The prince of Arab Historians, ibn Khaldun, who wrote at the close of the XIV century, has, in his chapter of *'Ibar* dedicated to African countries, a passage on Muslim Ethiopia. But the text of the Bulaq edition is unfortunately full of gaps. I will try to translate it forthwith, while I indicate the complements derived from De Slane's translation in quadrates, which were useful in other manuscripts.

«On the west (of the States) of this King (the Abyssinian *Hatse*) there is a town [called Damot], where there is a principal king who has a vast realm. To the north there is still another king, called Haqq ad-Din Muhammed ibn 'Ali ibn Walasma', in a town [called Wifat], whose inhabitants converted to Islam during an unknown epoch. Their ancestor, called Walasma', was a subject of the king of Damot. So, the *Hatse* became envious and, therefore, he assaulted him and seized the country. Then the fight continued and, having seen the *Hatse* weakened, the descendants of the Walasma' took back their territory from the *Hatse* and his descendants. And after having become the lords of Ifât, they devastated it. Then we have the news about Haqq ad-Din who was succeeded by his brother Sa'd ad-Din after his death. They are all Muslims; and they manifest acts of subjugation to the *Hatse* sometimes and oppose him in other times. God is the King of Kings».<sup>24</sup>

From the passage of ibn Khaldun one can elicit the following various data:

a) The Sultan of Ifât belonging to the Walasma' Dynasty was previously subjected to the authority of the king of Damot. This is the first time that we hear about the political importance of Damot from Muslim sources. We do, however, know from the fragment of the chronicle

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<sup>24</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *'Ibar*, ed. Bulaq, VI, p. 199 (= Translated by De Slane-Casanova, Vol. II, p. 105, Paris 1927).



published by myself at another time, that the Sultanate of Shewa had its own preponderant situation among the Muslim states of southern Ethiopia, before the Walasma' of Ifât conquered it in 1285. So, we fathom from ibn Khaldun, therefore, from another source of high value, that Damot exercised its hegemony on southern Ethiopia still earlier, as far as Ifât, the most eastern country of Muslim Ethiopia on the highland, recognized as subject to Damot. From the manuscripts followed by De Slane, I think we have the right word. The Bulaq edition reads it, instead of دامت as دامرئ which does not give the sense of an Ethiopian state and, therefore, graphical corruption is very probable.

Damot was located immediately to the west of Shewa. And regarding its importance some reminiscences of the Ethiopian tradition have remained, above all, later, in records held by King Moti-lame of Damot and within his relationships with Saint Takla Haymanot, the founder of the monastic community of Asbo, thereafter called Dabra Libanos. Now we can see clearly how the monks' deeds, Takla Haymanot during an earlier period, and then Gabra Manfas Qeddus, the established Christian centre in western Shewa from Asbo to Zeqwala, wedged themselves between the Kingdom of Damot and the Sultanate of Shewa, by paving the way for the fall of both states under the beatings of the Christian Abyssinia. One can say that between these two states Damot was the first to capitulate, if one thinks that al-'Umari, who compiled information reaching Cairo in 1332-1338 AD, already considered Damot one of the Negus' 'climatic zones'. The expansion of Christian Abyssinia, however, is first conducted with a determined breakthrough toward the south of the Blue Nile Valley to Hawash during the XIII and the XIV centuries, and therefore, across the Dabra Libanos-Zeqwala route; and then from there it made for the west toward Damot and only at a later date did it make for eastern Shewa. I have already touched upon, elsewhere, how the conquest of Aanz (to the north-east of Shewa) had taken place during the reign of 'Amda Tsyon I (1314-1344).

b) Ibn Khaldun also furnishes tidings about a certain difficult war led by one of the Hates against the Sultanate of Ifât for the sake of

removing its dependence on Damot. This war had its own ups and downs, because in the first phase conducted for the Abyssinian conquest of flat, it suffered reprisals on the part of Muslim countries. In which year did the war, alluded to by ibn Khaldun, take place? It is very difficult to say. The hypothesis that the informants of ibn Khaldun could have alluded to the war waged by 'Amda Tsyon I against Sultan Sabr ad-Din in 1332 could flash in one's mind; but that one had neither brought about the conquest of Ifât, nor had it any motive whatsoever to be linked with Damot (as it appears in the Ethiopian Chronicle) and nor followed by any Muslim military reprisal. The allusion to Damot, owing to reasons hinted at above, would rather shift the chronology of the war, which ibn Khaldun is talking about, to at least the XIII century.

At any rate, Ifât's adamant resistance of Christian Abyssinian initiatives gives a new explanation of the reasons for which, as we have seen now, the movement of the Negus toward the south was directed toward the west first. Only during the second period did it do so toward countries such as eastern Shewa and then to Ifât, which are both are relatively near to the coast and, therefore, en route for communication with Arabia and hence, had to be more developed and better armed.

c) Ibn Khaldun, at last, refers to a recent event of the death of Sultan Haqq ad-Din and the accession of Said ad-Din to the throne. We know from the History of The Walasma' that this occurred during the month of *Safar* 788 *Hegira* (= 4<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1386).<sup>25</sup> This occasion will, therefore, help us, as terminus post *quem*, to date the information received from ibn Khaldun about Ethiopia.

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<sup>25</sup> *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'Etiopia*, here above, p. 143 note 18 and 19.

## § 7 The Genealogy of The Sultans of The Walasma' of Ifât

I had published the Story of The Walasma' some years ago, which gives, among other things, the genealogy of that dynasty of Muslim monarchs of Ifât.<sup>26</sup> We have learned from the fragment of the Chronicle of the Sultanate of Shewa that the Sultans of the Walasma' of Ifât had annihilated the Makhzumite Dynasty which ruled the Muslim Shewa and succeeded it in the hegemony over Muslim Ethiopia in July-August 1285.<sup>27</sup>

Two passages from Arab writers give information on the Walasma'. Their genealogy has been listed, above all, by al-Tagribirdi. Under the year 841 *Hegira* (5<sup>th</sup> July 1437-23<sup>rd</sup> June 1438), he cites the reigning monarchs then in his list:

«The infidel *Hatse* and his enemy (reign) in Ethiopia: the King of the Muslims Shihab ad-Din Ahmed Badlay, the son of Sultan Sa'ad ad-Din Abu 'l-Barakat Muhammed ibn Ahmed ibn 'Ali ibn Nasir ad-Din Muhammed ibn Dalhuy (var. Dalhun) ibn Mansur ibn 'Umar ibn Walasma' al-Jabartial-Hanafi».<sup>28</sup>

We first see the *Nisbah* «al-Jabarti», which confirms how the Walasma' came from Gabarah or Gabart, which al-Maqrizi says is a district in Ifât. It is no less worthwhile to note the appellative that the monarch bears: '*al-Hanafi*', so attesting that in the XV century the Ifât Dynasty had already passed to the Hanafi rite. Regarding relationships between the Shafi'ite and the Hanafi rites in southern Ethiopia, I have already touched above.

The genealogy left behind by al-Tagribirdi will give us a useful confrontation with the other two sources: Kitab al-Ilmam of al-Maqrizi

<sup>26</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 140.

<sup>27</sup> *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa*, cit., here above, pp. 215-216.

<sup>28</sup> At-Tagribirdi, *Nugum*, ed. by Popper, Vol. VII, p. 4 (sub anno 841 *Hegira* =1437-1438 AD).

and the History of The Walasma'. The three sources coincide in the substantial part, complete each other in other points and diverge in others. The last part of the genealogy from Ali to Sa'd ad-Din is the same in all three sources. Only al-Tagribirdi, just as al-Maqrizi in other cases, adds the complete name of Sultan Sa'd ad-Din. And in the end, as the main divergence, according to al-Tagribirdi, 'Ali is not, as is for the other two sources, the son of Sabr ad-Din, but rather the son of a certain Nasir ad-Din Muhammed, for his part the son of Dalhuy. So now it is not possible to put in doubt the ascertained historical figure of Sultan Sabr ad-Din, the adversary of Negus 'Amda Tsyon I, about whom the Ethiopian Chronicles talk. Regarding this very Sabr ad-Din the History of The Walasma' does not specify the paternity; but for al-Maqrizi, Sabr ad-Din was the son of نحوي And this would induce us to identify Sabr ad-Din Muhammed the father of Sultan 'Ali (and the adversary of Negus 'Amda Tsyon I) with prince Nasir ad-Din Muhammed who, according to al-Tagribirdi, was the father of Sultan 'Ali. It could most probably be sheer ambiguity between the names Sabr ad-Din and Nasir ad-Din or for a wonder, of a name subsequently assumed by that very Sultan himself. The identification is rendered more probable from the fact that the father of Nasir ad-Din Muhammed, according to al-Tagribirdi, is called دلحوي while the father of Sabr ad-Din Muhammed is called نحوي according to al-Maqrizi. I had supposed the other time that the in Maqrizi, the name نحوي had only been a graphical corruption of Baziyu بازيو the maiden son and the successor of 'Umar Walasma'. The name دلحوي of al-Tagribirdi, also, even if al-Tagribirdi depends on al-Maqrizi for this piece of information (for the others he cites *Kitab al-Ilmam*), however demonstrates that, in both manuscripts of al-Maqrizi and al-Tagribirdi one could see the name in question was not *Baziyu* (as is not in the manuscript of Leida, which is considered to be the autograph of al-Maqrizi).

Another but two observations. Above all, comparing these two names of the Walasma' sultans of Ifât (in the XIV and XV centuries) with the Makhzumite Sultans of Shewa (in the XII and XIII centuries) one notes how the names of a very great number of Shewa sultans belong to

indigenous onomastic, while the ones of the monarchs of Ifât are of Arab onomastic, almost totally. This is a certain sign of a more profound action of Islamization.

But some names are excepted, amongst which Walasma' is one. I am not hinting at Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad who lived within the court of the Negus and whose name is directly Ethiopic. However, I would still wish to raise the names of Baziyu (also written Baz'u, by al-Maqrizi), which would seem to have been connected with the Ethiopic root *bazha* «*multiplicari, augeri, growing*» the Amharic *bazza*. The one of Sultana Ma'ati-Layla which I believe is explained as almost composed of one word similar to the Ethiopic መከት '*devictio*' and to *-layla* which is similar to the Amharic ሌላ, the undefeated; always victorious.<sup>29</sup> We ought to remember, however, that in Ifât an Ethiopic Semitic language group we call Argobba is still being spoken to this very day. We now see that, according to al-Tagribirdi, Sultan Shihab ad-Din Ahmed Badlay was of Hanafi rite. This is new evidence about the preponderant status of the Hanafi rite in Ifât during the middle of the XV century.

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<sup>29</sup> C. Conti Rossini asks me to consider the parallelism between this interpretation of mine of the name of this Muslim queen and the Protocol formula of the kings of Ethiopia, which appears from 'Ezana to King 'Amda Tsyon I: *Za'iyetmawa' Lasar* 'he who is invincible by his enemy' (Conti Rossini, *L'ev. D'oro Di Dabra Libanos*, a note to doc. No. 6). He, likewise, hints to me about another possible interpretation, which, however, remains in the orbit of my own reconstruction, *Ma'at Lela* «who does not harbour any wrath» = quiet, peaceful (Cf. the feminine name, the Arabic Salimah), a moulded name almost the opposite of *Ba-Del Ma'at* «an ire in victory», in which the last name belongs to a well-known one, for example, *Ba-Del Anbasa*, the king of Ghedem in the itinerary of Jorga p. 148; *Ba-Del Hemiam*, the nickname of King Zar'a Ya'qob after the victory of 1445 (Conti Rossini, AETH. II, No, 44), *Ba-D'el Nan* king, *Ba-Del Wabaz*. officer of King 'Amda Tsyon I, *Ba-Del Wez*. officer of King Susenyos (Pereira, Chron., p. 78) etc. and which the name Badla could be a borrowed one here (Cf. also the root *Badala*), brought down, in addition to that famous Adal, by other persons as well, such as Beht-wadad of Lebna-Dengel (Basset, *Conq. De Liab.*, pp. 177-8) and by a certain chief of Beghemeder during King Susenyos' epoch (Pereira, cit., work, p. 83).

## § 8 Three Muslim Ethiopians In Yemen In The XIV Century

As we have seen evidence of the presence of a Yemenite in Ethiopia during the XIII century, so does al-Khazraji leave us a note about the presence of Muslim Ethiopians who had established themselves in Yemen in the XIV century: more concrete proof of the relationship between Muslim Ethiopia and the Arab Peninsula. Here are various documents:

«So died in the same year 724 *Hegira* (= 1323-1324 AD) the most pious jurist Abu 'l-Hassan 'Ali ibn Abi Bakr ibn Muhammed az-Zaila'i al-'Aqili, the descendent of 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib and the lord of the country of as-Salamah in Wadi Nakhlah. His country of origin was Batah, in the country of Ethiopia; and therefore, his family were called Banu az-Zaila'i, the children of the one from Zaila'. The first who had established himself in the country was his grandfather, Muhammed, who took a wife there and had a son. Abu Bakr, who also married a woman from his own lineage (of the descendants) of 'Aqil and had the above mentioned 'Ali and his brothers. They were a pious and scholarly family. 'Ali ibn Abi Bakr was a very devoted jurist, munificent and famous for largesse in contributions. He fulfilled pilgrimage many a time just as his own father had done before him. He died in the Noble Mecca during the close of the month of pilgrimage in the aforesaid year (724 *Hegira* = 19<sup>th</sup> November 17<sup>th</sup> December 1324 AD). May the Almighty God be compassionate with him!».<sup>30</sup>

In this case, therefore, one Yemenite family of this village, as-Salamah, is of Ethiopian origin. The jurist Abu 'l-Hassan 'Ali, who died in December 1324, represents the third generation of these immigrants. His grandfather Muhammed, who had first transferred himself from Ethiopia to Yemen, lived there during circa the first half of the XIII century AD. It

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<sup>30</sup> Al-Khazraji's *History of The Resuli Dynasty of Yemen*. Text Vol. II, London 1913, p. 54. This passage as well has been omitted in the translation done by Sir James Redhouse.

is interesting for us to hear the news about this transfer to Yemen of an Ethiopian Muslim erudite during that period.<sup>31</sup>

The country of origin of the family of Abul-Hasan 'Ali in Ethiopia has the name Batah. It is another name to be added to the list of place-names in Muslim Ethiopia and be identified. Conjecture would be too daring to think about regarding that region of Barato (or Barata). Did its two chiefs fight within the Muslim league against 'Amda Tsyon I in 1332? Barato been cited, in the list of Muslim allies and confirmed by the Ethiopian Chronicle, as not being very far from Harar.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, and since one accepts this hypothesis, I do not think one can deduce the whereabouts of this «Batah» and why our Abul-Hassan 'Ali bore the nickname of az-Zaila'i. The port of Zaila' was the port of entrance and exit from Ethiopia toward the Muslim countries of the East; and that is why the *Nisbah* 'az-Zaila'i' does not necessarily indicate the provenance from the same region of Zaila' in its strictest sense, but rather generically the origin from Muslim Ethiopia.<sup>33</sup>

Abu 'l-Hassan 'Ali's family as well had had the *Nisbah*: al-'Aqili because, explains al-Khazraji, they claimed despondence from 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, the brother of Caliph 'Ali. We have learned from al-Maqrizi that the Walasma' Dynasty of Ifât claimed to be the descendants of 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib.<sup>34</sup> The information brought by al-Khazraji proves that these genealogies circulated within Muslim Ethiopia from as far back as the XIII century. It is typical today that Somali genealogies make a Somali progenitor a descendent of 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib still.

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<sup>31</sup> The Ethiopian immigrants soon acquired a great deal of prestige, because very truly Abu'l-Hassan 'Ali is called 'lord of as-Salamah'. And it is another evidence of high and enough cultural degree reached by Muslim Ethiopia during XIII and XIV centuries. We also have to raise the question noted by al-Khazraji regarding the marriage of Abu al-Hasan 'Ali's grandfather (an Ethiopian) with an Arab woman.

<sup>32</sup> *Histoire Des Guerres De Amda Tsyon, Roi D'ethiopie*, ed. by J. Perruchon, in Jan., 1889, p. 322.

<sup>33</sup> Moreover, al-'Umari says it expressedly (*Masilik al-Absar*, ed. by Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Paris 1927, p. 4).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. my article *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa Nel Secolo XIII Secondo Un Nuovo Documento Storico*, here above, p. 218; ed. by al-Maqrizi, *Kitab al-Ilmam*, ed. by G. Zaydan, Cairo 1896, p. 9.

Al-Khazraji once more informs us about another Ethiopian jurist under date 723 *Hegira* (= 10<sup>th</sup> January-29<sup>th</sup> December 1323). Here is the passage in question: «in that same year Faqih Abu 'Abdallah Muhammed ibn Abi Bakr ibn 'Ali, nicknamed al-Gida'ii because he originated from a region in Ethiopia called Gidhyah, died. He was also known as az-Zaila'i. He had studied at Harar under ibn Zaki; thereafter at Wadab under al-Gayit then under al-Muqri, about whom we have talked above.<sup>35</sup> He was famous for his sound recitation of the Koran and his knowledge of grammar; and so he had many pupils. He died in the month of *Safar* of the aforesaid year (723 *Hegira* = 7<sup>th</sup> February - 8<sup>th</sup> March 1323 AD). May the Almighty God be merciful with him».

This second Ethiopian too was very highly educated: a man of letters and a teacher of the Koran. He was of Gidaya origin, a certain neighbouring district of Muslim Shewa, which I have touched upon in §4. And, one notes, beside this *Nisbah* al-Gida'ii, he bears the name az-Zaila'i, albeit his own country is geographically very far away from Zaila'. This confirms what I have just said above, in this same paragraph, about the very generic value of *Nisbah* 'az-Zaila'i' for Muslim Ethiopians.

Faqih Abu 'Abdallah Muhammed's emigration to Yemen too comes to be dated as having taken place at the close of the XIII or during the first years of the XIV century, by dint of his own death in 1323 and after a long cultural formation in various schools in Arabia.

Alongside these two savants, suffice it to cite one third Ethiopian personage, who instead was a soldier. al-Khazraji recounts<sup>36</sup> how on 29<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 763 (*Hegira* = 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1362) Emir Ba Hadir as-Sunbuli, having allied himself with the inhabitants of a village called al-Qurayshiyyah, made a raid against the Ma'azibah tribe. And they, a few months later, on 14<sup>th</sup> *Rabi'* II 764 (*Hegira* = 9<sup>th</sup> January 1363) wreaked vengeance of a counter-raid on al-Qurayshiyyah. Seven inhabitants of al-Qurayshiyyah

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<sup>35</sup> Faqih Abu Bakr al-Muqri, a native of the region of Ta'izz, used to teach in 'Aden during the second half of XIII century. Cf. al-Khazraji, cit., work, text, Vol. I, pp. 323-353.

<sup>36</sup> Cit., Wor., text, Vol. II, p. 102; translation in Vol. II, p. 103.



killed in this second clash; and 'among them Ibrahim az-Zailai', who was one of their most famous horse-men'.

We do not know anything more about this personage; and his own exact region of provenance is not definable either after what we have said about the *Nisbah*: 'az-Zaila'i'.

These three episodes regarding Ethiopian personages in Yemen and the one narrated above (in §2) of Yemenite personages in Ethiopia attest the cultural and political exchanges between southern Ethiopian Muslim countries and Arabia during the XIII and XIV centuries. Further research would certainly supply other positive results. And this, we ought to be attentive, keeping ourselves from the question which is entirely different, from the presence of Ethiopian slaves in Yemen, should only urge us to consider the reciprocal migrations of locally notable personages from one shore to the other.

**§ 9      An Ethiopian Embassy In Yemen In 1369**  
**According To al-Khazraji**

Al-Khazraji, in his *Story of The Resuli* writes, under the date of *Shawwal* 770 *Hegira* (= May 1369 AD):

«The ambassador from Abyssinia came with gifts and precious presents in the month of *Shawwal* of the above-mentioned year».<sup>37</sup>

Though the Arab writer does not specify it, I do not think it is improbable that we are rather talking here about Christian Abyssinia's embassy, that of Sayfa 'Ar'ad's, to be sure. From the start of the Solomonic Dynasty, as we have learned from Arab documents, the Negus benefitted from services rendered by the king of Yemen who played the role of intermediary between the former and the Sultan of Egypt. The Negus succeeded, for obvious reasons, because it was much easier for the Abyssinians to make contact with the neighbouring Yemen rather than with Egypt. But the scope and the value of these ambassadorial contacts of 1369 are still to be discovered and so we hope that new documents will be able to clarify them for us. In the meantime it seems to us worthwhile to hint at some information for the benefit of Ethiopists.

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<sup>37</sup> Cit., *Wor.*, text, Vol. II, p. 139; transl. Vol. II, p. 120.

**§ 10     The Yemeni Influence At Zaila' At The Close of The  
XIV Century**

Al-Khazraji narrates:

«During the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* (772 *Hegira* = 25<sup>th</sup> June 1371) the Sultan nominated the eunuch Amin ad-Din Ahyaf (in the position of) the Governor of Zabid. His nomination took place on 11<sup>th</sup> of that month and he continued in this position till he died on a certain date which will be mentioned, and he was loved by the Almighty God. The period of his government was celebrated. He exercised his authority from Zabid on five moats at 'Aden, Ta'izz and Haradh; he also enjoyed authority on those overseas, on the people of 'Awan, Zaila' and on other remote districts». <sup>38</sup>

We find out from this document how the Yemenite governor of Zabid, nominated in 1371, had succeeded in exercising a certain influence on the Ethiopian landing-stages on the Red Sea and on the Gulf of 'Aden, The same thing was also true regarding Zaila' and the port of 'Awan whose location on the African shore has been hinted at here above in §4.

We understand that it only used to have a very vague influence, and has rather to be interpreted as one that concerned only the Yemenites who lived at Zaila', instead of local inhabitants. We already know how the inhabitants of Zaila' were very particular about the independence of their own country.

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<sup>38</sup> Cit., Wor., text, Vol. II, p. 118; transl. Vol. II t p. 131.

## § 11    **Negus Dawit I's Embassy In Cairo In 1387**

Al-Tagribirdi has this succinct information about Negus Dawit I, which is not devoid of interesting matters. It says:

«On 29<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* (788 *Hegira* = 21<sup>st</sup> January 1387 AD) the Ethiopian envoys presented themselves with a letter from their king, *Hatse* Da'ud, the son of Sayf 'Ar'ad. They carried, on twenty camel-backs, gifts of rare objects from their country, among which some large pots full of wrought chick-pea gold: whoever saw them believed they were chick-peas and other similar gifts».<sup>39</sup>

Negus Dawit I came to the throne in 1382 and reigned till 1411. Nothing more can be said about the motive of his embassy to Cairo. The colossal amount of gifts, unless local exaggeration, will have one assume that it really was an embassy that came to Cairo to ask for, after having presented the customary gifts, the nomination of a new Metropolitan for Ethiopia. And so we could have a point of a certain reference for the chronology of the Metropolitans of this period of the XIV and XV centuries which is by itself very entangled. However we ought to hold that, according to the Ethiopian chronology, the Metropolitan Salama, the famous inciter of religious studies in Ethiopia, died in the year 1388-1389. Therefore, he was still in office in 1387, the date of Dawit I's embassy to Cairo. So we have to assume that the chronological discrepancy of one year must have been due to an error, and therefore, could the embassy to Cairo have really referred to the succession of the Metropolitan Salama?

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<sup>39</sup> Cit., Wor., Vol. p. 383,

## § 12 The Maltreatment of The Ethiopian Muslims During A Certain Event That Took Place In 1419

Al-Tagribirdi writes once more saying:

«Then on 7<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Jumad al-Ula* (822 *Hegira* = 1<sup>st</sup> June 1419 AD) the Sultan summoned the Christian Patriarch. The Qadis and the learned men were already present with the Sultan; and after the Patriarch had been presented in front of him (the Sultan), he reproached him, threatened him and held him responsible for the humiliation suffered by the Ethiopian Muslims in the empire of the *Hatse*, the monarch of that country. And the Patriarch was threatened (so) with death. Shaykh Sadr ad-Din Ahmed ibn al-'Ajami, the Muhtasib<sup>40</sup> of Cairo supported him, and rebuked him (the Patriarch) for the slovenly Christians despite what was described for them regarding their dress and their own personal aspects».<sup>41</sup>

This news is interesting because it comes abreast with another episode we already know about in the influence the relationships between Egypt and Ethiopia had during the Middle Ages and who reciprocally exercised their treatments of Ethiopian Muslims and the Christians in Egypt, such as the intervention of the Mamlouk Sultan an-Nasir Muhammed (1322-1388) about whom we will be talking later. As a matter of fact the Sultanate of Egypt here considers the Coptic Patriarch as if he were a hostage in its hands vis-à-vis Ethiopian Muslims.

The maltreatment or rather 'the humiliation' of Muslims in Ethiopia, about which the Mamlouk Sultan lodged complaint during 1419, were goaded by Negus Yes'haq's undertakings toward the southern parts of Ethiopia, about which we say later in §13. Therefore,

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<sup>40</sup> Re the functions (as the police judge) of Muhtasib Cf. Quatremere, *Histoire Des Mamlouks Par al-Maqrizi*, Paris 1828, Vol. I, p. 114, note 143.

<sup>41</sup> Cit., *Wor.*, Vol. VI, p. 398.

this hap served as a pretext for the reinforcement of restrictive measures against the Copts, who thus had to stand the repercussions resulting from the Negus' victories.

### § 13 The Date of Negus Yes'haq's Death

Al-Tagribirdi has the following passage, under the year 838 *Hegira* 7<sup>th</sup> August 1434-26<sup>th</sup> July 1435):

«The *Hatse*, the Abyssinian king, the infidel and the Lord of the Amhara in Abyssinia died (in this year). His estates were much enlarged after wars waged and led by him against Sultan Sa'd ad-Din, the Lord of the Jabarta».<sup>42</sup>

Who was this King of Abyssinia about whom the Egyptian historian is talking? In 1434 Negus 'Amda Iyasus died after a very brief reign that last only four months. He was one of the four monarchs who succeeded rapidly within five years from 1429 to 1434, during the interval between two great figures in the history of Ethiopia: Negus Yeshaq (1414-1429) and Negus Zare'a Ya'qob (1434-1468). I do not exclude that the news of the Abyssinian *Hatse's* death that reached Cairo in 1434-1435 did actually refer to 'Amda Iyasus; but this news was confused in Cairo, at least in al-Tagribirdi's version, when it heard about the death of the very famous Negus Yes'haq's death, which took place five years earlier. Yeshaq, as we have seen, was in contact, albeit very tense with the Egyptian Court; it was certainly to him that the news referred regarding those victorious wars which rendered the Ethiopian kingdom large and wide, wars about which we still have today the superlative document in the so-called great one, of Yes'haq.<sup>43</sup>

Now *Hatse*, who al-Tagribirdi is talking about, namely, Negus Yes'haq, is said to have been the adversary of Sultan Sa'd ad-Din of Ifât. It is known how Sa'd ad-Din died at Zaila' fighting against a Negus, who according to al-Maqrizi's chronology would be Dawit I, and according to

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<sup>42</sup> Edited by I. Guidi (*Le Canzoni Ge'ez-Amarinna In Onore Di Re Abissino*, in RRAL, sc. mor. 1889, pp. 55-58). An additional note. Re the name of Queen *Ma'at Lela*, see the name *Badel Ma'at* borne by a chief of the Tekule during XV century (Conti Rossini, *Gli Atti Di Abba Yonas*, in RRAL, sc. mor., 1903. p. 186 = p. 9 of the extract).

<sup>43</sup> The text or number is missing

the chronology of the History of the Walasma', would instead be Yes'haq. The information given by al-Tagribirdi appears to be confirmation, though vague and uncertain, of the chronology of the Story of the Walasma'. So the confusion created by al-Tagribirdi, between 'Amda Iyasus and Yes'haq and the one al-Maqrizi would put between Dawit I and Yes'haq, would indicate the necessity of a cautious criticism before we welcome similar pieces of information collected in the Arab world from indirect sources.



## § 14 An Embassy of Ifât In Cairo In 1452

Al-Tagribirdi narrates: «Then Emir Janibey az-Zahiri, the Na'ib of Jeddah, presented himself (at Cairo's Court) together with Muslim Ethiopian envoys sent by the prince of Jabart, on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Sha'ban* (856 *Hegira* 24<sup>th</sup> August 1452 AD). And so the Sultan received them solemnly in the Court of the Sultanate».<sup>44</sup>

The Egyptian governor of Jeddah presents, therefore, to the Court of Sultan Chaqmaq in Cairo an embassy sent to Egypt by the Ethiopian 'Prince of Jabart'. In 1452, this prince was Sultan Muhammed ibn Badlay, the son of Sultan Shihab ad-Din Ahmed Badlay who had been defeated and killed by Zare'a Ya'qob in 1445. The Sultan of Ifât, whose family of Walasma' had originated from the region of Jabart, was actually known in Egypt by the name (Lord of Jabart), not unlike the name of the Negus who was also designated with the name (Lord of the Amhara) as we have already seen. The *Nisbah* (al-Jabarti) too would later assume a more generic meaning, reaching the level of designating, in Cairo, all those who came from southern parts of Ethiopia: an equivalent of, therefore, 'az-Zaila'i'.<sup>45</sup>

It is very probable that the Sultan of Ifât, with his embassy in Cairo, was intending to present the sad conditions of his country during the aftermath of wars with Zare'a Ya'qob ; but Cairo was not in a position to oblige him with great assistance and so the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus Ba'eda Maryam I brings our attention to what that Sultan Muhammed ibn Badlay actually did as an act of submission to that Christian Abyssinian Monarch<sup>46</sup> at the start of his reign (1468-1469).

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<sup>44</sup> Cit., Wor., Vol. VII, p. 226.

<sup>45</sup> Re the modern usage of the name Jabarti in Ethiopia Cf. what I have said in OM, V, 1925, pp. 614-615.

<sup>46</sup> *Croniques De Zare'a Ya'qob Et De Ba'eda Maryam Rois D'ethiopie*, Ed. J. Perruchon, Paris 1893, pp. 130-131.



**7. HARAR, THE ISLAMIC CENTRE IN ETHIOPIA****SUMMARY:**

1. The city of Harar and its merits,
2. Harar and Ethiopian Islam
3. The commencement of wars between Christian Abyssinia and Islam,
4. The Muslim State of Ifât,
5. The Muslim State of Dawaro,
6. Adal,
7. Harar in XIV<sup>th</sup> century,
8. The legal system of the State of Ifât in XIV<sup>th</sup> century,
9. The consumption of *Chat* among the Muslims of Ethiopia,
10. Ifât's influential relationship with Abyssinia?
11. The war between Abyssinia and the Muslim State, from XIV c. up to the transfer of the capital to Harar at the start of XVI c.,
12. The invasion of Abyssinia under the command of the left-handed Ahmed ibn Ibrahim and the political and religious characteristics of this under-taking,
13. The Second Conqueror Emir Nur ibn Mujahid,
14. The successors of Nur, up to the transfer of the capital to Aussa,
15. The Emirate of Harar and its layout,
16. The Egyptian conquest and the Abyssinian conquest,
17. The Harari Islam: brotherhoods and rites,
18. The Shi'ite nucleus in East Africa,
19. The godly Muslims of Harar: the pious -Emir Nur,
20. The pious Shaykh Abadir,
21. The minor holy men,
22. The mosques of Harar and the inscription in the mosque of Al Jami,
23. The gates of Harar.

## § 1      The City of Harar And Its Merits

The Harari language which this book deals with, is being spoken in the city of Harar today. It is a typical example of a city language and, being surrounded in each and every part by linguistic territories of the Oromo and the Somali, it forms a Semitic language island within a Cushitic territory. In a certain situation which we can call analogous, there we find - at the opposite end of the Cushitic territory - the Brawan, which is also a city language limited by the inhabited area of Brava and forms itself as a Bantu language island today, albeit within the Cushitic territory.

Harar, a name we often come across in our maps being erroneously written as (Harrar), is really mentioned in the Arabic documents as Harar, or as al-Harar. In Ethiopic, this name is written as Harar (but the modern Amharic pronounces it as Harar). Beside Harar, Hararge is used as well (but pronounced Harargie now; and vernacularly Arargie): a name which is composed of Harar-ge ‘the country of Harar’ instead. The Oromo and the Somali call the city of Harar, Adari. In Harari, the city is actually called Harar, but, it is also nominated, due to an antonomasia, as *Gey* ‘the country’ and, sometimes, *Bandar*, ‘the commercial centre’.<sup>1</sup>

In the centre of the very beautiful and rich region of the Harari plateau, the city of Harar had and still has great economical and commercial importance, while its own history gives it a political value of the first order in southern Ethiopia. A Harari savant, exalting the city of his birth-place, had written (in Arabic verse, though with inordinate rhymes and rhythms):-

فمدينة الهَرَر تزهر بالاولياء      ولاسيما حقا بامام الابرار

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<sup>1</sup> As is well known, this is the nomination which has been assumed by the word *bandar* in Egypt as well as in the Arabic used along the coast and in the Oriental Africa's markets.

يحق لها ان ترخى اذيال ثوبها      لان عامر ها مبيد للكفار  
 ولم لا وامام المجاهدين فيها      وبرقوعها نور العلماء الاخير  
 ومن اربع الجهات تجرى انهارها      ولاكن حاميهها الامام ابادر

The city of Harar sparkles with holy men: and, especially with the rightful Imam of the pious.<sup>2</sup>

Well deserved she is, to draw the hems of her raiment<sup>3</sup> 'cause he who has built her, is the annihilator of the infidels.<sup>4</sup>

And why not, while the Imam of the combatants of the sacred war lives there<sup>5</sup> and while the veil on her face is the light of her savants.

From all four sides her rivers do flow; but her protector is Imam Abadir.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> That is, the Holy Emir Nur ibn Mujahid, about whom, refer to Nos. 13 and 19.

<sup>3</sup> That is, can be proud.

<sup>4</sup> Nur ibn Mujahid had built the wall of Harar and killed Negus Glawdewos of Abyssinia in a battle.

<sup>5</sup> The above-mentioned Emir Nur.

<sup>6</sup> The holy man Abadir, about whom refer to No, 2 hereunder.

## § 2 Harar And Ethiopian Islam

Harar has been the capital of the Ethiopian Muslim State for centuries; and still is up to this very day even after the Abyssinian conquest occurred of January 1887 - the principal Islamic cultural centre in Ethiopia. It would be, therefore, beneficial to give a preliminary resume about the data we have on Islam of Harar, especially after a good quantity of those data, which will be explained hereafter, have been collected for the first time in Harar by myself, while the others are found scattered through single publications, hardly accessible outside the very limited circle of those who have a penchant for Ethiopic studies.

The age-old political, ethnic and economical bonds between the Arab Peninsula and Ethiopia have necessarily had also caused vivacious local repercussions among the peoples of the eastern coast of Africa, deriving from that religious and political movement, which we know as Islam. It is not yet the right time to present a profuse account of the immediate 'Ethiopian' consequences at the commencement of Islam and of the episodes more or less legendary, which, at any rate are widely elaborated by the Muslim traditions, such as, (the flight of Ja'far ibn Abi 'Talib to Ethiopia; the letter of the Prophet to the Negus; the conversion of the Negus; the praises of the Prophet regarding the Abyssinians, etc.). The scholarly Muslims had neither recorded the Ethiopic words, nor the ones presumed to be found in the Koran, and other foreign language vocabularies.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> In most parts, it does obviously regard idle-talk cases; however, there is no dearth of some really isolated Ethiopic words. As is in the list of As-Suyuti (*al-Mutawakkil If L-Ma Warada F'l-Qur'an Bi 'L Lugah al-Habasiyyah*, etc. Damascus ed., in 1348 anno *Hegirae*), where we come across for instance, *Hur* 'come back!' اهلك الى اهلك اي ارجع الى اهلك which is the Ge'ez '*Hur*' 'go away!'; and also *Nasa'a* 'get up' (إذا قام الرجل قالوا نشاء) which is Ge'ez *Nase'a* '*suscipere, raise*,' (whence, *Tans'a* 'surgere'); and in the same record once more (see *Abessinier*, I. Thell, Hannover, 1924, the following p. 41): *San'a* 'beautiful', which is the Ge'ez *Sannay*, and the observation: 'the *Sin* of Bil'al is a Sin to God', about which I have already made a mention in *Oriente Moderno*, XII, 1932 p. 266.

Historically speaking we can fairly say that the expansion of Islam in Africa has provoked the great defensive battle of Ethiopian Christianity, so giving Abyssinia its own role and its own value, which is necessarily anti-Muslim, in the traditional politics of Africa. This battle lasted for centuries, and the fall of Harar in the hands of Menilek II has established the most recent episode of belligerency.

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In this respect, it is interesting to note that the word *San'a* 'beautiful' is already found being cited. in ibn Sad's, who died in 230 *Hegira* (see Caetani, *Annali Dell' Islam*, IX, p. 342, and Noldeke, *Neue Beitrage Zur Semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, Strasburg, 1910, p. 59). This proves the ancientness of the passage S'S in the pronunciation of Ge'ez.

### § 3 The Start of Wars Between Christian Abyssinia And Islam

The start of the war, however, is not easily definable to us because it coincides with that epoch of the deep Middle Ages in Ethiopia, for which we fail to have a direct source of information from local chronicles. Systematic archaeological research could maybe keep us abreast with new data in the future; data which would be valuable, if it is obviously, as I have kept repeating up to now, research really based on systematic and valid archaeological results. Nonetheless, since the Muslim occupation of the islands of Dahlak has been declared to us through Arabic historical sources up to the VIII<sup>th</sup> century, and while in the following century, the very same islands were touched upon as Begia territory, and al-Ya'qubi (who writes his own *Kitab al-Buldan* in 891), attributes Dahlak to the Negus of Christian Abyssinia,<sup>8</sup> we ought to assume that the Muslim expansion throughout the African shores of the Red Sea and that of the Gulf of 'Aden had started much earlier and maybe had alternate courses.

The collections of the Ethiopian Royal Chronicles (*Tarika Nagast* 'Historiae Regum') reached our hands and start with the Chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon, who reigned from 1314 to 1344.<sup>9</sup> And this chronicle tells us of the wars of 'Amda Tsyon against the Muslims of the Ethiopian south. But Arab geographers and the historical documents of the Muslims of Ethiopia, allow us to complete the tale of the Ethiopian chronicle in such a way as to have a general vision of the situation of Islam in the Ethiopian south at the dawn of the XIV<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>8</sup> Al-Ya'qubi, *Kitab al-Buldan* in *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum Del De Goeje*, pars VIII Leida 1892, p. 319: *ادهلكا وهي جزيرة النجاشي*

<sup>9</sup> This chronicle was edited and translated by Perruchon (*Histoire Des Guerres De 'Amda Tsyon Roi D'ethiopie* in *Journal Asiatique*, 1890). See also Dillmann's *Die Kriegsthaten Des Konigs 'Amda Tsyon Gegen Die Muslim In Sitzungsberichte Der Koniglichen Preussischen Akademie Der Wissenschaften Zu Berlin*, 1884.



#### § 4 The Islamic State of Ifât

The most important among the Muslim States of Ethiopia<sup>10</sup> is the kingdom of Ifât. This name, which is pronounced as Ifât in the Ethiopic Semitic languages, is transcribed by the Arab geographers as *Wifât* and *Awfat*: the first name *Wifat* probably retains an old form; but the second (*Awfat*) could be the outcome of Arabic adaptation. The sovereigns of Ifât carried the title of Sultan and belonged to the local dynasty of *Walasma*<sup>11</sup> which claimed to originate from Ali. The political superiority of the sultan of Ifât in Ethiopian Islam has also been proven by the fact that the Chronicler of 'Amda Tsyon gives the same sultan the title of *Negusa 'Elwan* 'King of the Infidels'. Up to this day, among others, Abyssinia is named in the Harari language because the Muslim countries in the highland of Shewa were historically called so.

The kingdom of Ifât covered three distinct regions:

- a) An area of the highland, namely, a part (more or less extended, as the result of various wars) of the Shewan highland, including the slope towards the valley of Hawash. This region which concerns the name Ifât in its strictest sense, seems to have been the cradle of the dynasty of the *Walasma*'. The name Ifât has been kept in Abyssinia up to now to indicate this region, though reduced in the highland to a narrow strip of the north-east of Ankobar: so, we can say

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<sup>10</sup> I avail myself of regarding this point, beside my unpublished notes on the historical tradition of Harar, also to my *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'Ethiopia (In Memorie Della R. Accademia Dei Lincei, sc. mor., 1931)*; a translation of the works of al-'Umari which has been published by Gaudefroy-Demombynes (ibn Fadl Allah al-'Umari, *Masalik El-Absar Fi Mamalik El-Amsar, I, L'Afrique Moins L'Egypte. Traduit et annote par Gaudefroy-Demombynes*, Paris, 1927); of the fifth and the eighth volume by *Subh al-Asa* by al-Qalqashandi (Cairo, 1333-1915); of *Kitab al-Ilmam*, by al-Maqrizi (the ed. of George Zaydan, Cairo, 1893).

<sup>11</sup> *Wasma'*, in ibn Khaldun ('Ibar, VI, 199), has been corrected to read *Walasma'*. Cf., my *Documenti Arabi*, cit., on p. 459 note 2.

that today, the name Ifât properly indicates the Shewan slopes towards the low valley of Hawash;

- b) b) An area of the internal lowland, that is, the low valley of Hawash, viz., the area called Aussa. The ownership of this region by Ifât in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century has not been clearly confirmed by any written sources; but, whereas it is well known that Aussa actually became the centre of the Muslim State later on (see further at No, 14), it seems that it must necessarily have been also assumed that Aussa must have belonged to Ifât from very olden days: otherwise, the route Zaila'-Ifât, a route with paramount importance for the traffic of the Muslim State during this period in question, would have changed hands to a foreign territory;
- c) c) An area on the coast of the Gulf of Aden, around Zaila' has been absolutely and unanimously attested to us as the only port of the Muslim State of Ifât, 'where merchants make contact with the land on their way to that kingdom'.<sup>12</sup> For this very reason, the entire Ifât was famous with the name 'the Kingdom of Zaila'.

I will come back soon to the ownership of Adal and the region of Harar to Ifât.

The Kingdom of Ifât appears to us, in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century, as I have already mentioned, to be in a pre-eminent position among the Ethiopian Muslim States. But, al-'Umari had already mentioned the other Ethiopian States, such as: Dawaro,<sup>13</sup> Hadyah, Sharkha, Bali and Dara, stating that the Muslim Sovereigns of these states and Ifât were at loggerheads with and jealous about one another. The Ethiopian Chronicle

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<sup>12</sup> Al-'Umari, cit., p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> The name of this state is read, according to an accepted conjecture of Conti Rossini, *Ara'ini* (and then it corresponds with Ar'en, of the Ethiopian chronicles). See C. Conti Rossini, *Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel (Malak Saggad)*, Paris, 1907, transl. p. 95; and also Guidi's *Sul Testo Del Imam Di al-Maqrizi, In Centtenario Amari*, Palermo, 1910, 119 p. 394 and al-'Umari, cit., On p. 159 note 15.

of 'Amda Tsyon confirms this situation when it tells of how the prince of Adal and his Muslim league had decided to launch an attack against 'Amda Tsyon to avert the king of Ifât, who was arriving, so that they may have success without his help. So we can say that the hegemony of Ifât in the Muslim Ethiopia was rather a matter of fact and essentially depended on the possession of the route to the port of Zaila', the only way of communicating with other Muslim countries of the Orient.

## § 5 The Muslim State of Dawaro

Dawaro (دوارو in the Arabic writing and ደዋሮ the Ethiopic writing) appears in the Arab maps as a neighbouring state of Ifât (both Al 'Umari and al-Maqrizi<sup>14</sup> affirm the contiguity of these two states in a clear manner). But which region had the name Dawaro? At first glance, it seems that that name was used in succession to refer to different regions; and might rather have really caused a noticeable divergence when we come across our sources which cannot be explained except with variations of what could have happened in different historical periods regarding Dawaro. This question, as I have touched upon elsewhere, does have, not only the importance of geographical history of Ethiopia, but also and especially for the history of the region of Harar.

Nowadays, the name Dawaro (Dawaro, Dawro) is used in Ethiopia to name three different regions, one, farther than the other;

- a) The Dankals seem to have attributed this name to a region of the north-west of Aussa, including,, be it the lowland or the slopes of the highland, the East of Yejjju.
- b) The Oromo of Harar, according to traditions I have collected, say that Dawaro is the old name for a region inhabited by the Jarso today (Oromo), that is to say, the strata of the Harari highland, towards the Zaila' plain, on the north-east of Harar.
- c) The populations of Sidama of the Omo Bottego give the name Dawaro to a region on the left side of Omo, separated from the same course of the river by the finite and allied country of the Wolamo.

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<sup>14</sup> *Kitab al-Ilkan*, edited by G. Zeydan, p. 7 وهي مجاورة الاوفات (which reproduces the information furnished by al-'Umari, cit., on p. 15, «ce royaume est limitrophe de celui de Awfat»

From these three diverse denominations, we can above all start by excluding the third because, it is impossible to sustain that our historical sources for the XIV and XV centuries are referring to the countries on the Omo banks. The name Dawaro, even if not a simple and casual coincidence (it is about one of the old names resulting from a toponimistical background of Sidama which has remained alive in the north, in the adjacent regions of Shewa?), could have been adopted by the peoples of the Omo Sidama in memory of immigrations from countries farther north, as happened to other names as well.

We, therefore, have but the other two pinpointings for Dawaro; and so, if we limit ourselves to the toponymy and to the oral tradition of today, we will have to look to see if Dawaro, this Muslim State was on the Harari plateau or, further to the north or to the East of Yejjju, towards the Dankalia plain.

Should we examine written sources, the old ones tell us hardly anything about the situation of Dawaro. The information supplied by al-'Umari<sup>15</sup> that Ifât is situated between the Muslim States of Ethiopia, the nearest to the Egyptian territory and the shores in front of Yemen, may probably let us imagine that the hypothesis of a Dawaro situated to the north of Ifât, between Yeggu and Aussa, is destined to be excluded (as has instead been wished by the Dankali tradition which we have expounded hereupon) because, in this case it is not Ifât but Dawaro which is supposed to be the nearest to Egypt and to Yemen. It is however correct to interpret, in a topographical sense, the phrase of al-'Umari, who could have also hinted at the fact (immediately related after) that the merchants, to reach the Ethiopian Muslim South approached Zaila' and could that mean the territory of Ifât?

The chronicle of Negus 'Amda Tsyon shows us the Negus, who, from his residence in northern Shewa, 'set out to the right' (according to the interpretation of Perruchon) to go to Dawaro. We however must say that Perruchon's translation does not seem to be exact. The Ethiopic *wa-*

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<sup>15</sup> Or, cit., on p. 5.

*hora yamanaya fenota wa-batsha khaba hagar enta sema dawaro* could be better explained as «and went southward and reached a country whose name is Dawaro». As a matter of fact, *Yaman* has also the meaning of ‘*plaga australis*’; Dillmann, in his *Ethiopic Vocabulary*, s.v. cites the Clergymen’s Pass (I, 6). in which ‘*gyrat per meridiem*’ actually corresponds with the Ethiopic *Yigab’e Ba-Yemen*. Should this translation of mine be accepted, the pass of ‘Amda Tsyon’s chronicle is supposed to prove that Dawaro was in the south of Shewa (and not in the east, as has been understood by whoever following Perruchon’s translation). ‘Amda Tsyon’s chronicle however attests that there was a territorial contiguity between Dawaro and Christian Abyssinia. On the other hand, the chronicle refers to this territory as if it were the Negus’, after the return of his expedition from Adal which had first devastated some districts in Ifât and once more Dawaro, before returning to Abyssinia. Therefore, it seems that both Dawaro and Ifât had a common border with Shewa, and so, to go from Shewa to Adal, the passage through Ifât or Dawaro would have been necessary.

The chronicle of Negus Zare'a Ya'qob , who reigned from 1434 to 1468, recounts how the Negus left Egubba, in Shewa, not far from Tagulat, to encounter the Muslim army and reached Dawaro (so it has already become an Abyssinian province, at least partially) after having crossed Dago, 'Azor Gabya, Afaf, Yalabasha and Agam Gabya. These localities are not identifiable on our maps; but we ought to note that ‘Dago’ is certainly the same location as *Dagu*, the field from where Negus 'Amda Tsyon, according to his own chronicler, had reached Dawaro after four days. Moreover, the Muslims, having been defeated by Zare'a Ya'qob at Dawaro, were driven back to the Hawash river, where the runaways drowned (see further in No. 11). So then, Dawaro is adjacent to Hawash; we can also assume that the already conquered part of Dawaro by the Christian Abyssinians before the date of the battle (1445) is situated on the right bank of the river (because it was the invading Muslims of Dawaro who were being pushed back to Hawash).

But the more numerous data for the identification of Dawaro is

contained in later sources: *Futuh al-Habashah* by 'Arab Faqih (who wrote in the middle of the XVI century), as well as the writings of the Jesuit missionaries in Ethiopia (in the XVII century).

'Arab Faqih gives the following topographical references:

- a) Dawaro (in the XVI century and entirely Abyssinian) is situated on the right bank of the Hawash river and is separated from Fatagar by the same river.<sup>16</sup>
- b) Dawaro extends toward the west along Hawash up to the altitude of Moggo, (a village situated near a river with the same name and meets Hawash at about 39° East Greenwich, to the south-east of the now Addis Ababa);<sup>17</sup>
- c) Dawaro extends toward the south up to Webi, which stands as a border between Dawaro and Bali.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, an ed. of Basset, Vol. I (text), p. 102, II, p. 176. Imam Ahmed Ibrahim talks to his troop: يا معشر المسلمين انكم في عواش اشرتم ان نقصد ارض دواروا فقصدناها

«Oh Muslims, you have advised at Hawash that we should make for the land of Dawaro and we have made for it». (We notice that the name Hawash, which has become Awash in today's Amharic pronunciation has constantly been written as 'Awash in *Futuh al-Habashah* and in other Muslim documents. Refer also to my *Documenti Arabi*, cit., on p. 44, note 3). Idem, idem, on p. 179 (II, p. 271): يجلس في فطجار حتى يقل ماء نهر عواش ويعبر الى دواروا وكان الامام يريد:

«And the Imam [Ahmed] wanted to remain in Fatagar up to the decrease of the river Hawash and then to cross to Dawaro».

Idem, idem, on p. 241 (II) Wazir 'Adole is in Fatagar from where he sends some of his officers: قال لهم صلوا الى دوارا فصاروا حتى وصلوا نهر عواش

«He said to them: reach Dawaro! And they went, till they reached the river Hawash».

<sup>17</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., Vol. I, p. 247, II, p. 347: an officer of the Muslim army reaches the camp of Wazir 'Adole: وهو في مجو ثم سار الوزير عدلى وجيوشه يريون ارض دواروا ووصلوا الى قرب دواروا فصار اليها ودخلها من الطريق المسمى بالواي والواي نهر كبير عظيم وماء غزير ويتربا فيه التمساح وطواش كثيرة وهو حائل بين دواروا وبالي

«And he [Wazir 'Adole was at Moggo. And then Wazir 'Adole and his troops left in the direction of Dawaro and reached the vicinity of Hawash». Idem, idem, p. 263 (II, p. 361) عند الامام وهو في الطريق يريد الى ارض دواروا وقد حط في نهر مجو واجتمعوا هناك

«And they reached the Imam [Ahmed] who had been marching towards the country of Dawaro and who had already encamped near the river Moggo, where they met».

<sup>18</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., I p. 65 (II, p. 131) ثم نهض غازيا بعسكره وجيوشه الى ناحية الحبشة من دواروا فصار اليها ودخلها من الطريق المسمى بالواي والواي نهر كبير عظيم وماء غزير ويتربا فيه التمساح وطواش كثيرة وهو حائل بين دواروا وبالي

This data coming from *Futuh al-Habashah* moves Dawaro to the South of Shewa (and of Ifât) and decidedly to the West of Harar: it would more or less coincide with the nowadays Arussi province of the Ethiopian Empire.<sup>19</sup>

The Jesuit Missionary writers are instead unanimous in locating Dawaro more to the north and the east; and more precisely in the Dankalia lowland, to the east of Angot (an Abyssinian province on the south of Tigre).<sup>20</sup> The manner being so, the Jesuit writers' region of Dawaro almost matches with the one indicated by the tradition of the Dankali. Only one letter written by P. Luigi de Qzevedo seems, despite its vagueness, to locate Dawaro more to the north because he put it between Oye<sup>21</sup> and Fatagar in a row (that is to say, between the country of the Guraghie and the northern Shewa).

So we have, in the documents as well, two different identifications for Dawaro:

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«Then he departed with his troops for an expedition making for Abyssinia in the direction of Dawaro and went there (Dawaro), in which he entered through a route called 'Of Wabi'. Wabi is a great and important river, full of water, in which there live many crocodiles and hippopotami. It is a buffer between Dawaro and Bali».

*Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., I, p. 261 (II, p. 359): فقال لهم ما تقولون في ارض دواروا نرسل لها جيوشا ونجلس نحن في دبربرهان قال فرشحام دين ما يكون هذا الكلام وعاد البلاد ما اسلمت من نهر عواش الى نهر وبي «Said he [the Imam] to them (to the Emirs): What do you say of Dawaro if we send it a body of troops while we remain at Debra Brehan?». Saying so answered Farashaham Dini: «That would not be convenient. The country has not been Islamized yet, starting from the river 'Awash up to Wabi».

*Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., I, p. 291 (II, p. 387) واما البطريق حجه فانه تعدى الواى وقصد طريق دواروا

But the noble Hagah has crossed the Wabi and made for the route to Dawaro.

<sup>19</sup> Regarding the exterior of the province of Arussi, see my article *Per Toponomastica Dell'Etiopia in Oriente Moderno*, VIII (1928), p. 329.

<sup>20</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum Scriptores*, ed. by Becoari, V, 475: «O reino de angot que quasi ihes fica ao leste, indo descorrendo pera o sul por doaro, oifât etc.»; *Rerut Aeth.* cite (V, 12): «Despois se vay Angote stendendo e alargando entre os desertos de Dancaly e as terras de Doaro...».

*Rerum Aeth.* Cit., (VIII, 271): «ultimam Amarensis regni metam maxims orientalem et Zailano regno finitimam, superatis Doaro et Angote»; ibidem (VIII p. 378): «illimitatos illos miorum nostrorum fines ab Angote et Doaro usque ad Bisamo...».

<sup>21</sup> *Rerum Aeth.* Cit., XI 9 p. 131: «0 12° [reino] fica mais Dera a terra dentro: he o Oije de gentios e mouros: obedecem. 0 13° he Doaro, he de chrestaos. 0 14° logo iunto he Fatagar, de chrestaos». We can notice the fact that Dawaro is a neighbour of Fatagar and on the other hand, we can compare these indications with the ones of that of *Futuh al-Habashah*.



a) One version, that locates Dawaro to the south of Shewa and Ifât, between Hawash and Wabi. Such an identification which is based on *Futuh al-Habashah* is similar also to the interpretation presented by myself in the above-mentioned passage of the Ethiopian chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon and is not contradicted by the Ethiopian Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob because it is possible to assume - as I have already said - that on the left bank of Hawash, there is only the part of Dawaro which was conquered by the Abyssinians by then;

b) The other the northern Dawaro locates it to the east of Shewa and north of Ifât, towards Dankalia. It is the Jesuit Missionaries' (that coincides with the tradition of Dankalia).

But, the identification of the tradition of Oromo for Dawaro as one sector of the Harari plateau, is not, therefore, confirmed within any document. Excluding, therefore, this tradition and that of Sidama, which we have hinted above (Dawaro in the Omo Bottego basin), we remain with a query: When we say Dawaro, do we have to understand it to be the above-mentioned region, to the north of Ifât and towards the nowadays Dankalia or the region on the south of Ifât and that of Shewa, towards Webi?

Monsignor Taurin de Cahagne (who knew only about the tradition of the Oromo of Harar and a little portion of the writings of the Jesuits) volunteers to admit the existence of two Dawaros<sup>22</sup> 'the large Dawaro', which is supposed to be the northern one, in Dankalia, and 'the little Dawaro' in the highland of Harar. Gaudefroy-Demombynes as well, in his map of the Muslim States of Ethiopia (together with al-'Umari's translation), knows about two Muslim Dawaros: Dawaro I, which he places in the south of Ifât and Zaila', and Dawaro II, which he places in, for wonder, on the high valley of Juba, to the south-east of Lake Regina Margherita. I do not need to say, after having analyzed the sources presented here on, except that both identifications made by Gaudefroy-

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<sup>22</sup> See D'Abbadie, *Geographie d'Ethiopie*, Paris, 1891, on p. 309 and after. Cf., the notes of Monso Taurin de Cahagne as well, in his 'Bollettino Soc. Geogr. Italiana' 1883, on p. 521.

Demombynes cannot possibly be accepted because, they neither correspond to any document nor with the traditions.

Granted that the distinction between the two Muslim Dawaros would be a solution *per se* for the apparent contradictions of our sources: whatever authorizes us to do so except the wish to find an acceptable solution for this impasse? Moreover, harbouring the same intention, Esteves Pereira<sup>23</sup> did propose the opposite solution, that is, to consider only one immense Dawaro which extends from Angot and from Dankalia as far as Ifât and Bali: which is tantamount to rendering Ifât into two parts by squeezing Dawaro between Zaila' and the highland of Ifât and thus giving Dawaro a very great extension of latitude bordering Tigre as far as Webi.

But we do know about the opposite, that Dawaro was a tiny state which, according to al-'Umari,<sup>24</sup> had 'the length of five days and the width of two' and therefore, less than one third of Ifât which, according to the same source,<sup>25</sup> had 'the length of fifteen days and the width of twenty'. To overcome these difficulties, considering the different historical periods to which our sources refer might probably help us - rather than other hypotheses. al-'Umari and the Ethiopian chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon talk of the independent Muslim State of Dawaro (in the XIV century).

The Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob (for the XV century) talks about a Dawaro of an Abyssinian province, at least partially; while *Futuh al-Habashah* (about the XVI century) narrates about a Dawaro, totally Abyssinian; the Jesuit Missionaries' sources (about the XVII century) give Dawaro as if it were equally Abyssinian.

So, Dawaro, as an independent state, can have extended, depending on the outcome of its wars with the Christian Abyssinians and with the neighbouring Muslim states as well. Is it also possible that the independent regions of Dawaro which have successively succumbed to

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<sup>23</sup> *Chronica De Susenyos Rey De Ethiopia*, Lisbon, 1900, Vol. II, p. 466.

<sup>24</sup> Or, cit., on p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> Or, cit., on p. 5.

Abyssinian dominion, could have retained the name Dawaro as an everlasting existence, for a certain period of time, one beside the other, as a Dawaro, Muslim and independent, and the other Christianized Dawaro, a province of Ethiopia?

We ought to remember that something analogous has also certainly occurred to Ifât which, - having been partially conquered by the Christians - was alternatively called a Muslim country and a Christian country; while the Christian part was the west of Ifât and Muslim was the eastern part.<sup>26</sup> The question of Shewa cannot differently be explained, which - a province or rather the centre of the Abyssinian State starting from the first Solomonic Negus - appears also in Muslim documents as the name of a region that bordered Ifât and belonged to the Muslim State. Allow me to mention here some various Muslim writers<sup>27</sup> who have planted this small problem which the attention of the scholars of Ethiopian studies has not yet terminated.<sup>28</sup> Al 'Umari<sup>29</sup> catalogues *Shawa* among those whom he calls the *mother towns* of the Muslim Kingdom of Ifât. al-Maqrizi, speaking about Emir Haqq ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad,<sup>30</sup> tells us how, like him, after having entered Ifât, نزل ارض شوه وبنا هناك مدينة has established himself in the country of Shewa (*Shawah*) and founded a town there which he called Wahal. The Arab documents I have

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<sup>26</sup> For example, in the chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob, Princes Mata Gyorgis, then a functionary with the title of *Raq Masare*, are mentioned as the governors of Ifât (ed. by Perruchon, p. 13 and p. 16). while in Muslim Ifât (as has been attested by the contemporary al-Maqrizi) there used to reign the Walasma' dynasty. Later on instead and in the chronicle of Ba'eda Mariam (who reigned from 1468 to 1478), it is explicitly said that whoever rules Ifât, evidently as the vassal of the Negus, has the title of Walasma'. It is referred to the Muslim Ifât here, as a vassal, but not yet assimilated to the Christian provinces of the empire.

<sup>27</sup> The (Ethiopian) chronicler of Negus 'Amda Tsyon refers also to the Muslim Shewa, when he narrates (ed. by Perruchon, text p. 13, transl. on p. 121) that the Negus boasts about his having sent the troops 'into all the Muslim countries': Kuelgura, Gidaya etc. 'and into all the lands of Shewa'.

<sup>28</sup> Marquart (*Die Benin-Sammlung*, cit., p. CCCXXXI, note S) seems to distinguish three Shewas: one Muslim, one at the source of Hawash and one in the east of Harar. Refer also to Basset's note on p. 87 about *Futuh al-Habashah*'s (translation).

<sup>29</sup> Or, cit., on p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> *Kitab al-Imam*, ed. by G. Zaydan p. 11,

copied in Harar list it among the devastated towns in the epoch of Emir Nur by the Oromo *بلاد سيم وبلاد شوه وبلاد نجب الخ* (the country of Sim, the country of Shewa (*Shawah*), the country of Nagab, etc.). *Futuh al-Habashah* also makes clear mention of the ‘tribes of Shewa and Hargaya’ *قبائل شوا وقبائل هرجاية* where Muhammed ibn Ibrahim, the brother of the Left-handed was appointed,<sup>31</sup> while elsewhere in the same *Futuh*, *Shewa* is the Christian country of Abyssinia.<sup>32</sup> These passages do adequately prove that the name Shewa, which outlined the famous vast region of the Christian Abyssinians, was contemporarily adopted by the Muslims to outline a neighbouring district of Ifât which had been annexed to the Muslim State in the XIV century.

Some analogous happenings could have occurred to Dawaro; and at that time, the different identifications made by traditions and by documents (to the north, on the borders of Yajju; to the south, on the right bank of Hawash; to the south, on the left bank of Hawash and up to Webi; to the south-east on the Harari highland, just to the north or to the south of the city of Harar) can represent different epochs of political and territorial situations of Dawaro, far from those dark Ethiopian Mediaeval periods up to the XVII century. But, and naturally this, like many other queries regarding the history of Ethiopia, cannot possibly be resolved definitely unless and until some archaeological research has been made in central and southern Ethiopia of the Ethiopian Mediaeval epochs.

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<sup>31</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* (text) on p. 37, (transl.) on p. 87.

<sup>32</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* (text) on pp. 156-157 and 257; (trans.) on pp. 243, 244 and 354.

## § 6 Adal

In addition to Ifât and Dawaro, the chronicler of Negus 'Amda Tsyon affirms the existence (in the XVI century) of a Muslim principedom of Adal. The prince of Adal instead counteracts against the king of Ifât when, as I have already said, he attacks the Abyssinian army before the arrival of the forces of Ifât. To the contrary of this Ethiopian source, al-'Umari (in the same XIV century) does not know, on the Muslim side's point of view, of an independent state of Adal; instead he only mentions Adal as one of the 'mother towns' of the kingdom of Ifât. These (mother towns) (thus has been translated by Gaudefroy-Demombynes, and I have not had the possibility of verifying the Arabic text of al-'Umari) are as a matter of fact regions attached to Ifât, just like Shewa, Adal and Baqulzar.<sup>33</sup>

We must probably understand that Adal, albeit nominally attached to the State of Ifât (and would explain why al-'Umari and late on al-Maqrizi ignore it as an independent principedom), had a noticeable political autonomy under a certain Emir (who was actually the Negus of Adal according to of the chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon). The tendencies of autonomy by the Emirs of the provinces have been widely documented for all the periods of the Muslim states of Ethiopia. And also, since we remember that Muslim Shewa was the seat of Emir Haqq ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad's in the second half of the XII century, who had a hegemonic position in the entire of Ifât when, and in the meantime, the grandfather of Haqq ad-Din, 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din was nominally still reigning in the capital of the same Ifât, we can assume that the (mother towns), which appear in Gaudefroy-Demombynes' translation of the works of al-'Umari, are just these Emirates of Ifât which had the privileged

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<sup>33</sup> It is probable that the expression (mother towns) of Gaudefroy-Demombynes' could correspond to the Arabic text of أمهات المدن *metropolis*, as has been suggested to me by Prof. Nallino.

status of autonomy.

It is noteworthy to have in mind that the name (Adal) was, just like the one of that of Dawaro, used to mean different regions. In the XIV century, as we have seen now, Adal is a small Emirate which is most probably politically included within Ifât.

In the XV century, the Chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob gives the title of king to the head of the Muslim State of Adal which, in the previous century, had the name of Ifât, while now, the Muslim Ifât, is included within the name of Adal; and the capital of this State is Dakar which, the Harari tradition places on the highland of Harar, on the east of the city. In the XVII century, the name (the inhabitants of Adal) (al-'Athail) in the Arabic documents) means the bedouin Dankali looters only. And still in these very days, the current usage of this term by the Shewa Abyssinians, Adal is generically used to indicate the lowland of Dankalia or, in a specific manner, the one part of the Abyssinian Dankalia which is included in a region between Hawash (in the vicinity of the railroad) and up to the French border, on the south of Aussa. And (Adaloch), in Amharic really refers to the Dankali of this latter region. Even now, as a consequence of these documentary variations with the geographic value for the name Adal, we find Adal in some maps as a name for Dankalia in general; some other times instead, as the name of the southern sector of Dankalia. Nevertheless, in Gaudefroy-Demombynes' map, we trace two Adals: one in northern Dankalia and the other instead, in the south, as a part of Dawaro I, on the slopes of the Harari plateau. Among others, this is an indirect witness to what I have assumed above regarding the oscillation of the meaning of the name Dawaro.

## § 7 Harar In The XIV Century

Nearby Ifât, whose king is (the Prince of the Infidels), Dawaro and Adal, the chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon names (three leaders of Harar) among its long list of Muslim leaders. This is the first mention of Harar in historical documents. However, it attests nothing more than the existence of Harar in a political situation which is very secondary during the XIV century, 'the three leaders of Harar' have been only mentioned); and if it is admitted, -as seems possible that the second part of the list of Muslim leaders had at least been made according to geographical contiguity, it would have been possible to add also that Harar was already a Semitic language speaking country then because, it is listed together with Zefjeji and Zabilji, countries whose names are like the southern Ethiopic type ones.

Therefore, it is neither possible to accept, nor to exclude that Harar was included as the principal town of the Muslim States (the kingdom of Ifât or the Emirate of Adal), nor that the leaders of Harar lived on the peripheries of the State of Ifât without any precise dependency. Regarding the inclusion of Harar within the State of Dawaro, we have already seen the reasons for which it is rather improbable.

## § 8      The Legal System of The State of Ifât In The XIV Century

Ifât and Dawaro (including also Adal and adding the district of Harar as well) formed the eastern part of Muslim Ethiopia of the XIV century: the part that was nearest to the coast and, therefore, more susceptible to evolution through contacts with the Arab countries of the Peninsula. It is possible to gain some data from Arab and Ethiopian writers regarding the organization of the aforesaid Muslim States in that epoch.

The head of the State of Ifât is a king who bears the (indigenous) title of *qat'qas* in Ge'ez writings. This title has been attested by al-'Umari and has been confirmed by the History of the Walasma' which was published by myself.<sup>34</sup> The fact of finding the title *qat* in al-'Umari's works has also a linguistic importance because, it is evidence that the passage S > T, a general rule today in southern Ethiopia, was already a fait accompli in the XIV century. The first sovereign of Ifât, whose title of Sultan has been attested by documents, is Sa'd ad-Din ibn Ahmed, who reigned from 1386 to 1415. Correspondingly, the Ethiopic documents of the XV century certify that the title *qat* had become a feudal title, which was later conferred by the Negus himself, indeed, on the governors of the subjugated Muslim provinces, *qat* of Waj and *konch qat*, head of Konch, have been recorded in the chronicles.

The king had a throne which, according to al-'Umari, was made of iron, adorned with precious stones.<sup>35</sup> As an insignia of his sovereignty

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<sup>34</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., on p. 44.

<sup>35</sup> Also al-Maqrizi, though having had omitted these last details (he used to verify, at least partially, al-'Umari's works through new informants), records accurately; regarding Ifât, he says that ملكها يجلس على كرسي (*Kitab al-Ilmam*, cit., on p. 7). And Demombynes, referring to the Christian Abyssinian institutions, says in a note which ought to be read as *harir* and not *hadid* and understood to men (a wooden throne, covered with silk). Such an emendation does not seem to be necessary. Moreover, al-Qalqashandi too (see, 334) reproducing al-'Umari repeats:



he wore a strip of silk wrapped round his head in a manner that left the cranium exposed. This peculiarity reminds us also of the diffused customs among the Cushitic populations:<sup>36</sup> the Somali have a strip of cloth that passes from the forehead and ends up around the head and then comes to be made into a knot at the nape of the neck, as an insignia of command for the hereditary heads of the tribe or confederations. This fabric was called by the Hawiyya of the middle valley of Webi, for example, with the name *Mayrah* which really means 'liana', as a euphemism. In the north of Somalia, at the Mijiurtin, for example, the name of the same strip of cloth *belt* in common parlance is *boqor* and is euphemistically used to designate a hereditary head of the Mijiurtin, the Sultan in Arab documents.

Another regal insignia was a silk parasol which was carried by a page to shade the sovereign during his outings. Such insignia, very diffused in Asiatic states as well as the African ones, is in use in Christian Abyssinia for a Negus hitherto.

The king and the Emirs, when they mounted a mule, took their own pages together with them on the rump, as a sign of prestige; however, this was not done when they mounted a horse. Such a custom makes us recollect the one which is general today in southern Ethiopia (be it Christian or Muslim) in which, at least one page holding, on foot that is, one hand leaning on the rump of the mule which is being ridden by the Sovereign or a Head. Is this the residue of the day-to-day stylized custom to which al-'Umari had borne witness? And when the king or the Emirs went on foot, they used to lean on the shoulder of two of their own pages.

The Emirs depended on the sovereign of Ifât. In (the more recent) Muslim documents, they appear to be the leaders of single districts. In the chronicle of «Amda Tsyon, beside district leaders, we come across some head of tribes or bedouins (the ones of Gabbal, for example, and those of Zallan shepherds) and also across nomadic stocks

فان من عادتهم ان الملك يجلس على كرسي من حديد معظم بالذهب

<sup>36</sup> Regarding references of the fillet of the Sovereign of the (Christian) Abyssinia, see also the two notes by W. Max Muller, *Die Kopfbinde Als Königszeichen Bei Den Semiten*, in OLZ, 1913, c. 16018; and *Die Königsbinde Der Abessinischen Herrscher*, in OLZ 1910, c. 1425.

(such as Warjeh, the Arate and the Maya) who lived on the border of the Muslim State. But Ifât had a territorial layout and no aristocracy; however, the bedouins, who lived on the periphery, had instead retained an aristocratic system.

At a later date, the tribal bedouins of Dankalia and those of Somalia became the customary refuge of the rebellious Emirs against the Sovereign of Ifât and thus they were drawn, bit by bit, into civil wars within the Muslim State.

The habitual dressing manner of the inhabitants of Ifât is composed according to al-'Umari, of two *futas*: one wound around the waist and the other just simply hanging on the shoulder as a bandolier. This is the costume of the northern Somalis today, who are, therefore, denominated by the Hawiyya Somalis (further south) as *lamma godla* 'those with two pieces (of cloth)'. But, the costume of Christian Abyssinia today is different altogether.

The inhabitants of Ifât cavalcaded unsaddled and bareback. Such a habit, contrary to whatever Demombyne says, is still being kept alive among the Oromo, the Sidama and the southern Shewa people (Amharic has even a particular verb which indicates 'cavalcade without saddle' *qwalqqwala*).

And when al-'Umari talks about the music «of the Sovereign of Ifât, he rather reminds us, as Chambard has already observed, of the institutions of the States of Sidama: the trumpets of the horn of antelopes, reed flutes with a cow horn at its tapered end. Also drums carried suspended around the neck and carried by men are not the custom of Christian Abyssinia, where instead, the drums of prestige that belong to the sovereigns and the heads are carried on mule back (only the drums for liturgical services, *kabaro*, are instead carried by men).

Both, al-'Umari and al-Maqrizi, in the former's footsteps, supply data about the agricultural products of Ifât. Some of these products are of typical Ethiopian highland ones (wheat and wild peach fruits); but the others are of lowland varieties (sugar cane and banana). This is confirmation that Ifât was territorially comprised of a sector of the Shewan

highland and of a part of lowland Dankalia and Somalia today, as I have already said hereupon.

It is very interesting to learn about the fact, certified by the Muslim writers, that in the State of Ifât, an Ethiopic language was spoken,<sup>37</sup> together with the Arabic one (the latter, probably, as the language of trade). The Semitic Ethiopic had, therefore, diffused more than that of today in the south-east of Ethiopia, in the XIV century, but during the last centuries, it succumbed to Dankali and Somali.

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<sup>37</sup> I do not think it is possible to deduce more from such a succinct piece of information that appears in al-Maqrizi's text as (cit., on p. 7): *وكلام اهلها باللغة الحبشية ويتكلمون ايضا بالعربية*: Nevertheless, and for all practical purposes, we cannot accept the hypothesis put forward by Marquart (*Die Benin-Sammlung*, Leida, 1913, p. CCLXIX) that in Ifât, the Agau language, written with Arabic characters, used to be used.

## § 9 The Consumption of Chat Among The Muslims of Ethiopia

A particular mention has to be made regarding the use of *Chat*. It is well known that the leaves of this shrub, the *catha edulis* of Forskal or, *celastrus edulis* of Schweinfurth, are chewed and have an exciting effect on the nervous system. The use of *Chat* has diffused today among the Muslims of the south-east of Ethiopia, particularly in the region of Harar, which is also the main centre of its production; its use has also spread among the Muslims of the other regions of Ethiopia, as in the former states of the south-west Oromo, for instance.

For Christian Abyssinians, the use of *Chat* is typically Muslim; and the consumption of *Chat* is probably considered as a sign of adherence to Islam. As a matter of fact, and as an example, it was said about Lij Iyasu in 1916, when he was deposed by the heads of Shewa for his asserted Islamic tendencies (in Amharic verses):

ብላ ጠጣ ብለው ብሰጡት አያቱ  
ጫቱን እየቃመ ሔደ ወደ አባቱ

«Though his grandfather (Menilek) had given him food and drink, he (Iyasu) just went away towards his father, chewing *Chat*». The father of Lij Iyasu, Negus Mika'el, was a Muslim of Wollo who converted to Christianity.

Had *Chat* been ever used in Ethiopia by the Christians as well? Two passages of the Ethiopian chronicle seem to admit it, according to the interpretations which have been given, up to now. Above all, the chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon recounts that the Sovereign of Ifât, Sabr ad- Din, before entering a war against Christian Abyssinia, made his wartime bragging (according to Ethiopian wonts and habits) saying, among other things, (we quote Perruchon's translation): «*Je ferai ma residence de Mar'ade, la capitale de son royaume. J'y planterai des Tshat car les Musulmans aiment beaucoup cette plante et elle faisait aussi partie des presents qu'il*

*envoyait au roi. Sabradin permit donc a son armee de livrer bataille au roi 'Amda Tsyon».* Now, the Ethiopian text does not agree with the translation made by Perruchon regarding the second part of this phrase because; wa-Wahabo...Kama (the interpretation followed by Perruchon) cannot mean 'il permet...de'. The correct interpretation seems to be that of the manuscript No. 143 of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of Paris, which has Wahabo ...Kama, without wa- (Perruchon follows instead the manuscript No. 861, in the British Museum = 392 Wright). Therefore, the correct translation of the phrase is: 'Regarding Mar'ade, his capital, I shall make it mine and shall plant *Chat* there!', because the Muslims have a special liking for it. And the tribute which he (Sabr ad-Din) was in the habit of paying to the Negus, he gave it instead to his own troops so that they fought for him). As we can see, however, it is not only that the chronicler never talked about *Chat* being given to the Negus as a tribute, but he also affirmed that *Chat* is Muslims' alone.

Another passage can be found in the Royal Chronicle from 1769 to 1840 which has been published by Weld Blundell.<sup>38</sup> Also here, *Chat* has been referred to as an alien custom; the chronicler in fact says that Ras Aligaz, during his stay in (Muslim) Yajju, «was reconciled with Gugsä and Alula with a negative and an affirmative oath on *Chat*, just as the Oromo did». To clarify this passage, we have to remember that above all, Ras Aligaz was a Oromo. He adopted a Oromo rite for the reconciliation with other heads, as the chronicler records among other things. This Oromo rite of making use of *Chat* has nothing in common, notwithstanding how much Weld Blundell seems to believe in, with the Muslim custom of chewing *Chat*. It rather has to do with pagan Oromo rites, which Cecchi has described to us<sup>39</sup> and which is based on the idea that the shrub of *Chat* is the preferred seat of a genie (a belief that can be

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<sup>38</sup> Weld Blundell, *The Royal Chronicle of Abyssinia 1769-1840*, Cambridge, 1922, p. 153 (text), p. 421 (transl.)

<sup>39</sup> *Da Zaila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa*, Rome, 1884, Vol. II, pp. 241-242. Regarding the negative cath, of which the chronicler talks about, see my *Folk literature of The Oromo of Southern Abyssinia*, Cambridge, Mass., 1922, p. 144.

explained well with the exciting properties of *Chat*). The passage which regards Ras Aligaz attests only that that Oromo head had followed, together with his new friends one of the pagan rites of his own stock.

## § 10 Ifât's Influential Relationship With Abyssinia

On what terms did the Muslim State of Ifât find itself with Christian Abyssinia during the XIV century? The chronicler of 'Amda Tsyon shows us a Negus who dismisses Muslim monarchs and princes and replaces them by others. In the above-mentioned passage as well as in others, *Gada* has been clearly hinted at as 'a gift of homage' which the Monarch of Ifât paid to the Negus. This information is not a boast by the Christian Abyssinians; al-'Umari has already confirmed to us that the Muslim Monarchs of Ifât paid, (in their despair and misery),<sup>40</sup> a fixed tribute to the Negus. And al-Maqrizi, in the XV century, confirms the payment of the tribute as proof of subjugation on the part of the Muslim Monarchs towards the Negus.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, the same Ethiopian chronicle and the Muslim texts narrate the wars and the lootings that were afoot without pause between the Christian Abyssinians and the Muslims of Ifât and the bordering countries as well. We might however probably think, not of a bond of vassalage, but rather- at least regarding Ifât and in the first half of the XIV century - of a de facto subjugation, imposed by wartime vicissitudes, once too many towards Christian Abyssinia.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Al-Qalqashandi as well, cit., v, p. 332-333, probably reproducing al-'Umari's phrase verbatim: على ما هم عليه من الذلة والمسكنة

<sup>41</sup> *Kitab al-Ilmam*, cit., p. 6 «Hate, the king of Abyssinia has the hegemony upon them all and he collects a tithe of their belongings every year, in the form of fabrics or another *res*». Al-Qalqashandi, having already quoted *Ta'rif* by the same al-'Umari said very explicitly that the Negus had had 99 kings under his Abyssinian kingdom (him personally completing the one hundred), and amongst these 99, the monarchs of the Muslim States of the south (Ifât, Dawaro etc) were summed up as 7:

الحطي الذي هو سلطاتهم الاكبر تحت يده تسعة وتسعون ملكا وهو لهم تمام المائة وقد ذكر في التعريف ان هذه السبعة من جملة التسعة والتسعون الذين هم تحت يده

(see 332). Cf. also the same al-Qalqashandi's, cit., VIII, p. 39. *Ta'rif's* passage to which *al-Qalqashandi* refers to is on p. 30, Cairo edition (al-'Umari, *al-Ta'rif Bil-Mustalih al-Sarif*, Cairo, 1312, eg.)

<sup>42</sup> At any rate, the conditions in which these submissions used to occur, in some periods, were particularly severe. The same al-Qalqashandi (in his works, cit., VIII, p. 11) clearly states the

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وهم مع ذلك تحت امر صاحب امرا ملك ملوك الحبشة يختار لولاية ممالكهم من شاء توليته ولا يريدون ويصدرون إلا من امره «They moreover, are under the orders of the king of the Amhara the king of kings of Abyssinia, who chooses for their kingdoms whoever he wishes; they neither prepare, nor react except and according to his orders». This information is only a précis to what al-'Umari says in his *Masalik*, cit., p. 19.



## § 11 The War Between Abyssinia And The Muslim State

Let us see now, very succinctly, the vicissitudes of wars between Ifât and Abyssinia. The chronicle of 'Amda Tsyon conserves the reminiscences of the first attack launched by Haqq ad-Din, the brother of the Monarch of Ifât, Sabr ad-Din Muhammed ibn Mansur, against a body of Abyssinian troops lead by a certain Te'entaye, a relative of Negus 'Amda Tsyon. The attack succeeds and the Negus, as retaliation, attacks Ifât, he loots and plunders the capital; then he hits the nomad bedouins hard, namely, Gabbal and Warjeh; he kills Darader, the nephew of Sabr ad-Din. This all happened during the first years of 'Amda Tsyon's reign, from 1314 to 1344.

Sabr Ed-Din reinitiates the thin end of the wedge of the war, but 'Amda Tsyon had a better day; he also defeats Haidar, the king of Dawaro (in the Ethiopic writing *haydara*), the ally of Sabr ad-Din<sup>43</sup> and installs the brother of Sabr ad-Din, Emir Jamal ad-Din on the throne of Ifât.

A certain raid made by the prince of Adal against the Christian Abyssinians gives 'Amda Tsyon the pretext for an expedition against Adal. The expedition is victorious from the first, but meanwhile, a large Muslim league is formed in which Adal, Dawaro and many other heads, amongst who are the ones from Harar, took part. The league was promoted by a certain Qadi Salih who became the leading spirit of the Muslim defence. The fame of this league and the one of Qadi Salih spread amongst the Muslims; one Harari documents narrates also how, three centuries later, the tomb of Shaykh Salih was discovered in Harar in 1621 (as well as his comrade's, Shaykh Sa'd) miraculously on the very spot

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<sup>43</sup> The name Haydar, the Prince of Dawaro, later recurs constantly when songs are sung in honour of 'Amda Tsyon and his successors, while regarding the chief of Ifât, the same songs mention a certain Hambal Abu Bakr, who is not identifiable through our documents (Zaynab, Hambla Abu Bakr's wife, is mentioned). See I Guidi's *Le Canzoni Ge'ez Emarinna In Onore Di Re Abissini* in RRAL sc.mor. 1889; and E. Littmann's *Die Altamharischen Kaiserlieder*, Strasburg 1914.

where Emir Nur ibn Mujahid was later interred.

Jamal ad-Din, the new monarch of Ifât, adheres to the League; but the prince of Adal, out of sheer jealousy towards him, induces the Confederates to attack the Abyssinians of 'Amda Tsyon before the arrival of troops from Ifât. The Muslims are defeated. The Negus, passing through Ifât at a later date after his victorious campaign, coerces the Emir of Baqulzar with his armed forces to deliver the renegade Christians over to him, the ones who had converted to Islam. Then, having the monarch of Ifât refuse such a request from his end (in conformity with the Islamic Law), 'Amda Tsyon dismisses him and appoints another brother of Sabr ad-Din, a Nasr ad-Din.

The news pertaining to the renegade Christians has noteworthy importance, more so because; the Ethiopian chronicler makes a record of (priests, deacons and soldiers) among those who have converted to Islam. This proves the tendency which was already brewing and fermenting in the XIV century, a tendency (which we will find very developed during the great Muslim invasions of XIV century) to group conversions and the political motives and stimuli of the contrasting religions, one group to the other.

We mark that the Muslim documents do not keep a record of the ephemeral stay of the two princes, Jamal ad-Din and Nasr ad-Din, appointed by Negus 'Amda Tsyon, to the throne. Both The History of the Walasma', published by myself and the one by Maqrizi, give 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din, the son of Sabr ad-Din as the successor. This is the constant attitude of the Muslim chroniclers who, as we shall see later, always consider it as a year of effective reign of a Muslim monarch. Added to them are others who have been condemned and are spending their terms in Negus' prison. However, those who are temporarily at bay with the throne due to forces of the Christian armies. This could also cause an argument with the chronological correspondence vis-à-vis the Ethiopian chronicle.

This victorious campaign of Negus 'Amda Tsyon caused an important Egyptian political intervention. Al-'Umari recounts how when he reached Cairo, the ambassador of the Negus was already there, as well

as the Muslim legate (of the king of Ifât) Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Zaila'i, who asked the Mamalik sultan to intervene between the Negus and the Muslims in favour of the latter. Therefore, the Sultan ordered the Monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria to write to the Negus urging him to abstain from attacking the Muslims. Demombynes sets the period of this message from 1322 to 1338, during Sultan al-Nasir Muhammed's reign in Egypt. So, this means that we are in the second half of Negus 'Amda Tsyon's reign. Egypt and Abyssinia, divided though by religions, keep contacting each other through the Patriarch.<sup>44</sup> Here Egypt asks for better treatment of Muslims through the Patriarch (and this, so being the case, is tantamount to an implicit parallel with the good treatment of the Christians of Egypt by the Sultan). Later, the Negus would intervene in favour of the Christians of Egypt in answer to a request made by the Patriarch (and will be also inherent in the negotiations for the treatment of the Abyssinian Muslim subjects).<sup>45</sup>

As soon as Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din ascends the throne of Ifât and Negus Sayfa 'Ar'ad (whose baptismal name was Newaya Krestos), and is the son of 'Amda Tsyon, comes to the throne of Abyssinia as well, the war is rekindled. The Negus dismisses 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din, replaces him with his son Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad ibn 'Ali and keeps him a prisoner in Abyssinia for eight years. At a later date, the same Sayf 'Ar'ad, lets 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din return to Ifât and instead, he recalls Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad to his own bailey, evidently as a hostage. Now we are in a period of Muslim State feebleness that is aggravated the more due to the strife among the Muslims themselves, as the one of that of Haqq ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad's rebellion.

With the elapse of time, Haqq ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad

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<sup>44</sup> Al-Qalqashandi (*Subh al-A'sa*, cit., V, p. 333) has conserved the record of the following step taken toward the Negus by Sultan Barquq in the latter's first years of reign (Barquq reigned from 1382-1398). A letter from the Sultan was sent to the Negus and another one from the Patriarch, Mathew, through a trusted mission headed by Burhan ad-Din al-Dimyati. The aim of this step was the same of that letter written fifty years before, by Sultan al-Nasr Muhammed.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Conti Rossini's *Storia D'Etiopia*, Vol. 1, Rome, 1928, pp. 288-289 and here above 278-279.

reconciles with his grandfather 'Ali ibn Sabr ad-Din, re-establishes himself and puts his capital there in Muslim Shewa, which soon became so prosperous that the old capital of Ifât declined. So he attacks Abyssinia afresh in the last years of Sayf 'Ar'ad's reign (who died in 1382) and, after nine years of victorious wars, he died in battle while he was fighting Negus Dawit, the son and the successor to Sayf 'Ar'ad, in Shewa, in 1386-1387.

Haqq ad-Din is succeeded by his own brother, Sa'd ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad, who becomes later the eponymous hero of the long struggle of the Muslims of Ifât against the Abyssinian Christians. It is after him that the country of the Adal takes its name of the *Land of Sa'd ad-Din* (بر سعد الدين).

He fights Dawit I victoriously while he conquers and plunders the Christian countries. But in the end, he is vanquished and chased as far as Zaila', after which he cannot choose but withdraw to the island in the port of Zaila' which still bears the name the *Island of Sa'd ad-Din* today and then comes to be killed fighting, on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1415, according to the History of the Walasma' during the reign of Negus Dawit I in Abyssinia.

Once the Muslim State is defeated, it goes through another period of decadence. The son of Sa'd ad-Din, Sabr ad-Din ibn Sa'd ad-Din, having already taken refuge under the protection of the king of Yemen, Ahmed ibn al-Ashraf Isma'il, makes a comeback to the African coast after a year of absence and re-conquers the throne of his father from the Christians. But the Muslim State is torn into pieces once more during these first ten years of XV<sup>th</sup> century due to bloody internal disagreements among the numerous children of Sa'd ad-Din that renders the State weak vis-à-vis Abyssinia. Ifât very probably is already occupied by Christian invasions. The capital of the Muslim State, therefore, is neither the old one of Ifât, nor the new one of the Muslim Shewa that was founded by Haqq ad-Din ibn Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad. The centre of the Muslim State comes to be Adal, and its Sultan is found mentioned as 'the king of Adal' in the Ethiopian chronicle of the XV century. The new capital is Dakar, whose

exact location is unknown today. The Harari tradition, kept also by myself in a note copied from *Futuh al-Habashah* locates Dakar on the Harari plateau, on the outskirts of the nowadays Fiyambiro. But do we not also have a case of a belated localization of the old traditions regarding the Ethiopian Muslim state around Harar that was the last capital? Only Sultan Badlay ibn Sa'd ad-Din, who ascended the throne on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1432, is able, it seems, to have the Muslims once more to try a new and strong assault on Abyssinia.

In August 1443, Sultan Badlay,<sup>46</sup> under a full rainy season, fulfils a victorious raid on the Shewan highland, and taking the Abyssinians by surprise, he destroys villages and churches. Negus Zare'a Ya'qob, then reigning, retaliates with an expedition into the Muslim territory, but also this time, the Abyssinians are defeated. So in 1445, Badlay attempts another offensive and invades the Abyssinian part of Dawaro on the left side of the bank of the Hawash with a numerous army. Accompanying Badlay, is also his brother Khayr ad-Din, who was famous for being a valiant soldier. And on December 1451, Badlay meets the Abyssinian army led by the Negus himself, at Agbara, a Dawaro land. While the vagaries of battle seem to turn in favour of the Muslims, Sultan Badlay is killed on the field. And the death of the Sultan determines the defeat of the Muslims who are then pursued and pushed back to the other side of the Hawash. During the hot pursuit, Khayr ad-Din is also killed.

This victory of Agbara has very serious consequences. The Muslim State is put in a certain condition to the extent that for one century (up to the arrival of the 'Left-handed') it will not be able any longer to try an offensive war against Abyssinia. Negus Zare'a Ya'qob takes advantage of the prestige acquired at Agbara for the consolidation of the internal situation of Abyssinia, a situation which was already uncertain during the first period of the kingdom; and his messengers to the West boast about

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<sup>46</sup> See J. Perruchon's *Les Chroniques De Zar'a Ya'qob Et De Ba'eda Maryam, Rois D'ethiopie*, Paris, 1893 and my works, *L' Etiopia Del Secolo XV In Nuovi Do Cumentari Storici In Africa Italiana*, V, 1933, pp. 57-112; and *La Sconfitta Del Sultano Badlay ibn Sa'd ad-Din In Due Inediti (Miracili Di. S. Giorgio) Etiopici In Aethiopica*, II, 1934, pp. 105-109.

him as the victorious one over the Muslims, the common enemies of the European Christians as well as the Abyssinian ones, so much so that Alfonso the Generous, King of Naples, tries to induce Zare'a Ya'qob to a proposition of entering into a military alliance against Egypt.

While in Adal the Walasma' Dynasty falls after the defeat and even if Sultan Shams ad-Din ibn Muhammed is still able to repulse an armed expedition led by Eskender, who succeeded in reaching Dakar in 1479, we can say that the last of the Walasma' who exercised effective power on the throne of Adal was Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din, who came to the throne on March, 1488.

Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din had been killed by his own son-in-law Muhammed ibn Abi Bakr ibn Mahfuz during his return from a campaign against Lebna Dengel. Then a singular situation, not new among others in the Orient, was brought about. The Walasma' Dynasty retained nominal power and its princes ascended the throne with the title of Sultan; but some military chiefs of the provinces who rapidly succeeded to power, achieved by their own conquests and by force of arms, ruled the Muslim State with the title of Emir.

The autonomy of the provincial Emirs vis-à-vis those of Walasma' already rooted in the XIV century, as we have noticed, reached its apex at the end of the XV century, that is, during the decadence of the Muslim State due to routs suffered. Regarding this event, it is interesting to peruse the passage of *Futuh al-Habashah* which describes the relationship between the Emirs and the Sultan (the author of *Futuh* is a supporter of the party of the Emirs) which presents the Sultan, indeed, as a *Roi Faineant*,<sup>47</sup> who does not have other powers except that of receiving his own portion of the proceeds of taxes.

A tentative without the high-handedness of the Emirs and of regaining an effective dominion was tried by Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din. He transferred the seat of the Walasma'

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<sup>47</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, ed. cit., p. 12 (text) وعادة بر سعد الدين ان كل امير يكون له التقديم والتاخير والغزو والجهاد واكثر العساكر الى وجهه ولم يكن للسلطان غير خراج البلد ياكله.

and hence, the capital of the State to Harar in the month of *Sha'ban*, 926 *Hegira* (17<sup>th</sup> July-14<sup>th</sup> August 1520), he also endeavoured to oppose the Emir, who was then predominant and had the name Ahmed ibn Ibrahim (the Left-handed, for the Abyssinians), by force of arms. The tentative proved to be a fiasco; the Sultan was frequently defeated and Ahmed ibn Ibrahim now became the absolute lord of the Muslim State and of Harar his new capital. He himself, however, and despite his victories, never formally declared the fall of the Walasma' Dynasty: instead, when Sultan Abu Bakr was killed, the Left-handed did not hesitate to have the brother of Abu Bakr, called 'Umar-Din, recognized as the new sultan.

## § 12 The Invasion of Abyssinia By The Left-Handed

Having thus become the absolute lord of the Muslim State, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim restarts, or better to say, continues the political and military tradition, rife and in force among the Muslims of Ethiopia, and so goaded, he attacks Christian Abyssinia. During the wars that then followed, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim assumes - we do not know precisely when - the title of Imam. And this new title which is tantamount to a Lord with full effects in the neighbouring State, rather above that of the title of Sultan who still continued to appoint the nominal kings of the Walasma' Dynasty in Harar, will later have a remarkable importance for the history of Harar.

So the author of *Futuh al-Habashah* explains the political quiddity in two stories; and this passage of *Futuh* (reproduced also later in the Arabic chronicle of Gujarat by al-Ulughani) is found frequently copied in the Harari manuscripts which contain collected historical documents.<sup>48</sup> In the first story, the godly Sherif Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah al-'Aydarus (whose veneration in 'Aden and Hadhramaut is very diffused even today) is mentioned. This pious man is assumed to have appeared in the dream of a Muslim savant to announce 'Ahmed ibn Ibrahim as the Imam of the end of time' (we have to note that the author of *Futuh* was a contemporary to the narrated events).<sup>49</sup> The second story is equally founded on a dream. In a dream, the Caliphs, Abu Bakr, 'Uthman and 'Ali,<sup>50</sup> were with the Prophet. Ahmed ibn Ibrahim was in front of 'Ali; and the Prophet was presenting him as the chosen one from God to rule Abyssinia, This second dream is, therefore, less clear than the first one because, the nomination of

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<sup>48</sup> In these manuscripts the passage of *Futuh al-Habashah* gives the title: «A chapter on the nomination of the *Imam*, Imam [Ahmed An Ibrahim]», فصل في تسمية الامام اماما

<sup>49</sup> At any rate, it does not appear that the Left-handed was really proclaimed the Mahdi.

<sup>50</sup> It is strange that in this dream only 'Uthman, one of the four orthodox Caliphs, is missing. And this can be also explained, as G. Levi Della Vida brings it to my, attention, as a sign of A moderate Zeidi type Shi'ite tendency.



Ahmed ibn Ibrahim for Imam does not have more meaning, except indirectly, than his own apparition together with the First Caliphs and especially in front of 'Ali.

The last part of this second dream is only a witness to the mission entrusted to the Left-handed by the Divine Will. This mission is also attested by the story that is found in *Futuh* regarding a miraculous occurrence faced by Ahmed ibn Ibrahim. A swarm of bees catch up with him while he is on his way to Sultan Abu Bakr. The bees surround Ahmed forming a living muslin around his head and thus accompany him to the palace of the Sultan. Having reached there, they leave him only to wait outside during all the period of the visit and then to accompany him once more. This, adds the author of *Futuh*, 'was a marvel in favour of the Imam and a harbinger on the part of the Almighty God'.<sup>51</sup>

To this ingenuous tale which - as has been proved by Basset - has numerous similarities with the folklore of many countries, we have to add another proof to Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's mission deriving from a brief tale recorded by al-Ulughani in the Gujarat Chronicle;<sup>52</sup> As a result of testimonies of a certain 'Abd al-Wahab ibn Abi Bakr al-Yafi'i (that is, an Arab from Hadhramaut) and those of the pious Shaykh ibn Zarbayn, a prediction has been conserved: 'A pious man will undoubtedly appear in the country of Sa'd ad-Din and rule the entire Abyssinia, he shall', a prediction that came true with the arrival of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim.<sup>53</sup> Regarding these harbingers, *Futuh* adds analogous predictions made by al-Shadili (Shams ad-Din 'Ali bin 'Umar al-Shadili al-Yamani, who was buried at Mokha) and those made by al-Imam al-Mas'udi.

It is interesting to compare these signs for the Divine mission of the Left-handed in the Muslim tradition with that of the Christian

<sup>51</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., Vol. I, text, p. 12 وكل ذلك كرامة الامام وبشارة من الله تعالى

<sup>52</sup> E. Denison Ross, *An Arabic History of Gujarat: Zafar Ul-Walih Bi Muzaffar Wa Alih By 'Abdallah Muhammad B. 'Omar al-Marki Al Makki al-Ulughani*, London, 1921, Vol. II, p. 585.

<sup>53</sup> This passage is very important (it has not been pointed out hitherto) because it demonstrates how the manuscript of *Futuh al-Habashah*, in al-Ulughani's possession was not entirely identical to those in our possession.

Abyssinian tradition which explains why the Left-handed was sent by the Lord to test the Abyssinian Kingdom. Suffice it here to only remember the legend about Negus Lebna Dengel's bravado when he has the ground-cudgelled so that it gives birth to an enemy against whom he yearns to combat (and so from the ground Ahmed ibn Ibrahim arises); and also regarding the soul of the Left-handed who, having died at seven years of age, presented itself before the Lord. The Lord sends it back into a body so the resurrected Ahmed has Abyssinia under his power for fifty years (then much reduced because of the Virgin's intercession).<sup>54</sup> As we can see, the terrible ups and downs of wars have caused beliefs in Divine missions among the Christians and among the Muslims as well (of a victory or of a punishment), always entrusted with the Left-handed,

The course of events resulting from Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's invasion of Abyssinia is famous enough; and its episode could lead us away from the restricted limits of this study that is supposed to be dedicated to Harar and to the Muslim State of which Harar was a part.

I would only like to touch upon here an event that seems to me very characteristic of the state of heart of the Muslims of Harar and of the real nature of wars kindled by them against the Abyssinian Christians in the very period of decadence that followed the tentative of Badlay. Futuh affirms that, after the Muslim victory at *Shimbira-Kuré* (on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1529) and successfully after the expedition to Dawaro in June 1529, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim wanted to benefit from the defeat of Negus Lebna Dengel with the permanent occupation of a part of Abyssinia. However, the Emirs and the Muslim troops had openly opposed him: «Our fathers and forefathers were not used to being established in Abyssinia. They were used to making raids within the borders of the territories of the infidels, taking booty such as cattle and others and then to returning to the Muslim Land».<sup>55</sup> So, the Left-handed was coerced to go back to Harar.

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<sup>54</sup> Ignazio Guidi, *Leggende Storiche Di Abissinia*, in RSO, I, 1907, 17-20 (Cf.. C. Conti, Rossi, *Aethiopica*, in RSO, IX, 1921-1923, pp. 367-368, 462-463).

<sup>55</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., I p. 76. (text), pp. 146-147, (transl) Regarding to an analogous hap after that of *Shimbira-Kuré*, refer to *Futuh al-Habashah*, pp. 64-65 text (p. 131 transl.).

This attitude of the Harari army, which was then inured to raids and counter raids in bedouin wars, also proves Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's ability and prowess. Two years later, in 1531, he succeeds in resuming the war against Abyssinia and thus putting his concept for the invasion and a stable occupation into effect.

Albeit, the event occurred after *Shimbira-Kuré* also furnishes us with a historic explanation about some details for operational conduct on Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's part, which evidently had - especially in the initial periods - not to offend, at least openly, the traditional conceptions of his own chiefs and his own troops.<sup>56</sup>

Contacts between the Muslims and the Christians which caused the invasion of Abyssinia by the Left-handed's Muslim army were not without consequences of various temperaments.

Above all, the number of those who passed from one to the other contrasting religion was very great, and this happened in rapid conversions in which penitence and re-apostasy were rife. Sometimes, these conversions occurred en masse, as troops belonging to a given camp to the other. In most cases, as is evident, they had the substance and political reasons, not religious ones. The wooing and the innate syncretism also played a role in this attitude among the Ethiopian populations which, in their own culture (like their ethnic structure), elements of diverse origin have superimposed themselves for centuries, without any of them having destroyed the previous or older strata.

Let me mention two typical examples of such conversions. A certain Takla Haymanot, an Abyssinian Christian, converts to Islam and

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<sup>56</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, demonstrates Ahmed ibn Ibrahim as if he were obliged as for an example, to appoint his fiduciary men to high positions also hand-picked from amongst renegades and slaves, just to bring it home to the Emirs who (wanted to go back to their own country). Thus, *Futuh al-Habashah*, p. 186 (text), narrating about a certain renegade, says that «the Imam gave preference to him above all the Emirs because they (the Emirs) were all agog for returning to their homeland. And for this same reason, he appointed also 'Addole, who was the slave of Imam Ahmed's fathers)» (p. 278, translation).

ما امره الامام على جميع الامراء الا لانهم جميعهم يريدون النزول الى بلادهم فيسبب ذلك انه امر عدلي وكان مملوكا لابي الامام احمد

becomes Garad Abun's page. Then he is nominated as the chief of a district under the Left-handed Ahmed ibn Ibrahim. When he deprives him of the command in answer to a request made by the populace, Takla Haymanot 'leaves the Muslim country to go back to his own', and becoming a Christian afresh, he receives the command of a region in Abyssinia from the hands of the Negus. Later he defends this region against the Muslims with arms, but he is defeated. Taken as a prisoner, he was sent to the Sultan of 'Aden as a slave.<sup>57</sup>

No differently, the Muslim Awra'i 'Uthman ibn Dar 'Ali from Balaw stock, is made prisoner by the Abyssinian Christians and so he passes to Christianity. The Negus gives him the (very important) command of Ifât and that of Fatagar, the buffer provinces towards the Muslim territory. 'Uthman fights the Muslims for a long time; but when Ahmed ibn Ibrahim decisively attacks Ifât, 'Uthman converts to Islam once more together with his entire troops, twenty thousand in all, and so he receives the honour of an Emir and starts to fight the Abyssinian Christians once more, and by doing so, he singles himself out in different battles and in the end he dies in the field as a 'Muslim martyr'.<sup>58</sup> Just before him, there was a convert from Christianity to Islam along with his entire troops, in the very same Ifât; it was an Abyssinian chief who had the (interesting and ironical!) name of Eslam Saggad 'the Muslims prostrate in front of him' who is nominated - appropriately - in Futuh, as the hypocrite *Eslam*! Among other things, Eslam Saggad, abiding by the orders of the Negus, had to go back then from Islam to Christianity.<sup>59</sup>

Such an immense mobility of attitude on the part of the Christians as much as on that of the Muslims has historical importance indeed; for, it gives a reason for the rapid, but not always stable, repercussions of reported military successes from one side or the other during the long war. Two consequences do exist, of literary characters

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<sup>57</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, ed, cit., text, p. 83-87. Transl. on pp. 155-159.

<sup>58</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* ed. cit., text, p. 35, 181-187, transl. on pp. 76 t 273-278.

<sup>59</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, text, p. 181, transl. p. 273.

regarding these facts which have in *Matsehafe Qedar's* version of the Ethiopian rituals for the apostates who returned to the Christian religion and especially in the composition of Anqasa Amin '(the Porte of Faith)', which is an anti-Muslim polemical booklet attributed to *echagé* 'Embaqom, who was himself a Muslim convert to Christianity. Pertaining to Anqasa Amin, I have a manuscript which has come from the famous sanctuary of Kiddus Stefanos of Hayq. I preserve the possibility of preparing an edition regarding it. So, it is likely that the Muslims thought of preparing propaganda booklets similar to that of *Kitab al-Fara'idh*. (Regarding this point, see part III, hereunder).

In such a manner, we come across strange comparisons and strangely disguised beliefs as well in Christian and Muslim precepts. The author Anqasa Amin, who purposely quotes verses from the Koran (well understood by him by dint of being himself a renegade Muslim), does not hesitate to write: «And another time «your book», says to you: «Eat, drink and enjoy yourselves!: Marry those women whom you are in love with: two, three, four; and all those your right possesses!» Without even differentiating between males and females! And all this while our Lord did not give Adam except one woman only, our mother Eve!». <sup>60</sup> As is evident, this is a treacherous interpretation of the Koran, IV, 3, and is a characteristic one, especially the equivocal perfidy regarding the gist of *ماملكت إيمانكم*, the last part of the quoted verse.

In answer to this scandalous comparison on the part of the Christians regarding one verse from the Koran, the Muslim author of *Futuh* presents the scandal of a church called Makana Sellase which was founded by Negus Na-'od: «and the King has named it, with their polytheistic voice, Makana Sellase which means: «the house of Three Gods». May the Highest God be exalted! He is much higher than this!». <sup>61</sup>

Another important consequence of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's

<sup>60</sup> *Anqasa Amin* (manuscript 18, from my own collection, col. 15): ወ ፩ ጊዜ ይብላሉሙ በልዑ ወሰትዩ ወተፈግዑ አውሰሱ ዘፈተውኩሙ እምአነስት ፪ ወ ፫ ወ ፬ ወኩሉ ዘአጥረየት የማንክም ወአፈለጠ ተባዕተ ወአነስተ ወእግዚአብሔር ኢወሀበ ለአዳም ዘእንበለ ኣሐቲ አሲት ወይኣቲኩ እምነ ሒዋ

<sup>61</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, text p. 190, transl. p. 284.

undertaking was his having intensified the contacts of the State of Harar with the Muslim world, analogously as much is true for the Christian Abyssinians' contact with Europe, which was the result of the same ups and downs of the fight. The attention of the Muslim world was moved by the conquests of the Left-handed; and so, the Turkish Pasha of Zabid intervened in favour of the Left-handed by supplying him with firearms; the Sultan of 'Aden was on amiable terms with Ahmed ibn Ibrahim; and even in far Muslim India, the achievements of the conquests of Abyssinia were later welcomed, as we have seen in the Arab Chronicle of Gujarat, by al-Ulughani, and also because, a certain dynasty of Indian princes (the Rumikhanis or Habshis) traces its origin to a certain group of Abyssinian prisoners donated to Emir Salman of Qamaran, by the Left-handed. So, the growing influence of the Portuguese and the Catholics in Abyssinia, comes to be paralleled by the Turkish occupation of Massaua on the Muslim part (taking place in 1557) and by the following Turkish enterprise in the highland, terminated by the defeat of Abba' Garima in 1578.

### § 13 The “Second Conqueror”

But, the participation of Christian Abyssinia and the Muslim one in the great struggle that was brewing in the XVI century between the Western Powers and the Ottoman Empire should not have been of long duration; which instead and very soon, the weakening of both opposite parties (the Christian State and the Muslim State) stimulated the invasion of the Oromo to the Ethiopian highland which, defeating and pushing back both old adversaries, brought Ethiopia back to another long period of isolation.

As we are aware, Ahmed ibn Ibrahim has left Harar for his great undertaking; but his departure was all planned and effected outside the Harari State upon which the Left-handed did not directly avail anymore because, he considered his conquest, not much as an extension of Harar to Christian Abyssinia, but as an achievement of a mission that would let him transfer the future Ethiopian Muslim State from Harar to Abyssinia, and by doing so, Islamize the old rival elements against the Harari principedom. So we understand why Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, despite all his victories, was not popular in Harar where, as "The First Conqueror" (Sahib al-Fat'h al-Awwal), Nur ibn Mujahid, the godly Emir, was always preferred.

Nur ibn Mujahid appears, in the Ethiopian chronicles as well as in the Muslim documents, as the successor of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim with the title of Emir (Amir). «The Harari documents even name him also as Amir al-Mu'minin, Prince of the Believers,» however, it is very doubtful that Nur really bore this title when alive, Between the date of the death of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim (February 1543) and the appearance of Emir Nur ibn Mujahid on the stage of the Emirate (959 *Hegira* = 1551-1552), about nine years have elapsed, probably rife with internal crises within the Muslim State, a period about which we have no documents.

Unlike the Left-handed, Nur is presented to us as a local Harar hero. He has his seat in the city of Harar; takes care of the defence of his capital and builds the city wall, which is fortified by streams and bastions

that surround Harar to this date. The construction of this wall assures Nur a great traditional popularity. An interesting tradition attests to divine intervention in its construction: the wall, just built, collapses and would not stand erect unless and until the Hararis poured some containers of mead on the construction first.

Nur is also 'the Second Conqueror' (*Sahib al-Fat'h al-Thani*) because he vindicated Ahmed ibn Ibrahim by killing Negus Glawdewos; in a battle in 1559. Tradition and tales are rampant among both Christians and Muslims. Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's wife accepted to marry Nur on the condition that he also accepted wreaking vengeance on the Negus for the Left-handed's killing: an Amharic strophe comments, with the usual dalliance with words, of the Abyssinian poetry እሽነርብላነውያስገደለችው which in one sense means: «Be alive! saying so, she had him killed!», while in the second sense she says: «Yes, Nur!, and saying so, she had him killed!». The singer stirs up the marvel caused by the contradiction, evident in the first phrase, which is solved, when it was intended to mean *Nur*, not to mean 'live!', but as the proper name of the Emir).<sup>62</sup> Glawdewos is killed and his head is brought to Harar, where it is shown as a sign of triumph (this atrocious part has been confirmed by both Christians and Muslims). The Abyssinian singer comments in a line of his poetry (ዝናብስበራሱእርሱያቆማል) the literal sense, *Ba-Rasu*, within the verse has the value of: 'He stops the rain with his head!'.<sup>63</sup> An extraordinary drought afflicts the region of Harar after which a tremendous famine follows (this also has been confirmed by both Christians and Muslims). The Christian Abyssinians attribute the drought which torments the Muslims, to divine punishment for the profanation of Negus Glawdewos' head.

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<sup>62</sup> This strophe has been published by Conti Rossini in *Aethiopica*, 21 (RSO, IX, 1921-1923 p. 462), I have added here the explanation of dallying with words.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*. Also here I have added the explanation of dallying with words. We can make note that similar dallying with words are found in recent popular strophes which hint at the decapitation of Negus Yohannes IV<sup>th</sup>'s corpse, who was killed by the Deravish at Matamma'. Cf. my article *Una Raccolta Marica Di Canti Funebri* in RSO, X, 1924, p. 280.



Nur is also the first defender of Harar from the Oromo; and if, as the Abyssinian documents narrate,<sup>64</sup> he is seriously defeated just on his way back from his victory over Glawdewos, he never ceases waging wars up to the time of his death (one of his raids on the Oromo occurred three months before his death). With the death of Emir Nur, we can say that the greatest prosperity of the Muslim State has come to a close and, squeezed between Christian Abyssinia and the Oromo, enters a phase of a rapid decadence.

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<sup>64</sup> *Historia Gentis Oromo*, ed. by Guidi, p. 226 (text), p. 199 (transl.).

## § 14     The Successors of Nur

To this decadence, the internal disagreements have an especial role. The party of the Left-handed's family, which has remained in a secondary position during Emir Nur's reign, fights to have the throne back which, in the first instance, was occupied by Emir 'Uthman, the Abyssinian, and favourite of the deceased Nur. A ruler belonging to the Left-handed's dynasty, Talhah ibn 'Abbas succeeds him for a brief period (1569-1571); and then the group of the Emirs has the upper hand and imposes two monarchs, one following the other in a short period of five years, up to, in the month of April, 1576, another descendant of the Left-handed's dynasty, Muhammed ibn Ibrahim Gasa, succeeds in having his principedom recognized after a series of movements and assumes the title of Imam, a title which was already borne by the famous founder of his family.

We ought to keep a close watch on the effects that the Left-handed's undertakings (as well as on Nur ibn Mujahid's, who was the political continuation of the Left-handed's) have had on the internal situation of this Muslim State. Before the invasion of Abyssinia, a group of Emirs opposed the reigning dynasty of the Walasma' - as we have already seen - and this group, making use of armed force, trimmed the powers and the authorities of the king, till they rendered the kingdom only nominal. Such being the courses of events, we have a legitimate ruler for the first ten years of the XVI century, a ruler with the title of Sultan and an effective prince as Emir first and then Imam. Neither the politics of the Left-handed, nor the ones of Nur (at least due to his longer period of rule) formally dethroned the Sultans of Walasma' as an aim because they continued succeeding one other to the throne But, the last one of them and about whom we know, Barakat ibn 'Umar din, came to the throne on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1555, about twelve years before the death of Nur and with him, the Walasma' Dynasty disappears. In the meantime, the tendencies harboured by the descendants of the Left-handed are being defined; they start to be

considered the only legitimate rulers of the Muslim State (and by doing so, however, they went beyond what Ahmed ibn Ibrahim had himself claimed). It is typical of this Muslim state, the fact, clearly attested by documents, that against these claims of legitimacy of the Left-handed's dynasty presto sprouts a party of the Emirs' afresh; so this party does not only expect autonomy for single provinces but also, as a matter of fact the substitution of the rulers of the new dynasty with separate alien princes.

We again notice that Talhah ibn 'Abbas, who is now the first ruler of the Left-handed's dynasty, having ascended the throne (in 1569), assumes the title of Sultan and that is a tantamount to a *de jure* Sultan of Walasma', which the Left handed had borne as a juxtaposition to the title of Imam. Instead, the second ruler of the new dynasty, Muhammed ibn Ibrahim, assumes the title of Imam, which is supposed to be of that of the founder of the family itself but with a different substance because, the new Imam is ruling as a legitimate monarch now and alone, as it were.

The very same Muhammed ibn Ibrahim moved the capital from Harar to Aussa in 1577. The cause of this action, which would deprive Harar of its Muslim Islamic Centre, was equally because of the Oromo attacks which had intensively, and literally devastated the Harari plateau once more in those years and probably because of a necessity for defence against the coup d'états on the part of the Emirs who, were less difficult to defend against in a central position like Aussa and who were less manageable in a zone like the Harari one, which now became a border between the Muslim State vis-à-vis the factious Somalis and the Oromo foes.

The rulers, now established in Aussa, have the title of Imam and belonged to the Left-handed's dynasty; albeit only enjoying the title of Emir if they are alien to the dynasty of the Left-handed's. This continued up to when the Imamate of 'Umar al-Madayti (who ascended the throne in February -March, 1600) and thereafter, the title of Imam was assumed by all rulers of Aussa indifferently. So we have six epochs:

Rulers from the Walasma' Dynasty with the title of Sultan up to 1519.

‘A Sultan’ from the Walasma' Dynasty who had an effectively ruling relative Emir 1519-1531.

A Walasma' *Sultan* who had had an Imam relative (‘the Left-handed’s; and then an Emir: Nur) who effectively ruled between 1531-1567.

The Emirs and the Sultans who succeeded to the throne 1567-1577.

The Imam, of the Left-handed’s dynasty and the Emirs of another stock who came to the throne 1577-1600.

The Imams from Aussa from 1600 and afterwards.

And very soon, be it for Harar or Zaila', though being subjected to the Emirs appointed by the Imam of Aussa, they had autonomy much more than before, their Emirs were often the supporters of those who were against the Imam of Aussa. In 1585, Emir Sa'd ad-Din bore the title of ‘the Lord of the City of Harar’ (Sahib Madinat Harar). And after a ten-year period, and while Zaila' was succumbing to the invasion of the Somalis, the Emirs of Harar reacted to render their system of power hereditary: and so Emir 'Ali ibn Dawud (who ruled Harar from 1647 to 1662) became the founder of a new Harari Dynasty. This independence from Aussa, achieved in the middle of the XVII century, was never proclaimed and was never a consequence of a violent separation, as I have already assumed elsewhere,<sup>65</sup> because the political tradition for autonomy on the side of the Emirs must have gradually gnawed its way through a progressive decadence of the Imamate of Aussa to an attitude of total independence.

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<sup>65</sup> *Arab Documents*, cit., p. 85, note 3.

## **§ 15     The Emirate of Harar And Its Layout**

Thus a new Muslim State is formed and the Emirate of Harar would last for more than two centuries. Little indeed would remain from its history other than the chronological register of the Emirs. If we cannot even follow isolated events, we can still see the comprehensive results of the political achievements reached by the Emirate of Harar. The invading Oromo were accepted in the territory of the Emirate and were gradually converted from paganism to Islam and were framed within the Harari administrative organization. This is really an important success on the part of the Emirs of Harar, who not only did well in keeping their State standing (the only survival of the old Semitic - language speaking Muslim Kingdom which after the Imamate, fell entirely in the hands of the Dankali), but resuscitated with the new Islamized Oromo tribes. Harar owes its resistance and the conservation of the prestige of the city itself as a religious Muslim state to these clever politics. We notice too that the Emirs were also able to maintain their rule over the Somali tribes by subduing those people who were steadily fixed to the highland (often mixing with the Oromo) within district orders and at the same time exerting their control over the bedouins of the Ogaden. Thus a homogeneous Muslim State was made, though of three linguistically different populations: Oromo, Somali and Harari. So we can now fathom why this last language has found itself reduced to the capital of the State alone due to the numerical predominance of the Oromo farmers in the countryside. Coming to the small Argobba group of Ifât who had immigrated to the Harari Emirate and established itself in the south of Harar, we refer to it as a representative of another residue of the old great Muslim Kingdom which had itself protected on the highland of Harar.

The borders of the Emirate of Harar which appear in the middle of the XIX century, in the last period of independence, are the following: The slopes of the highland toward Zaila' on the east, excluding, therefore, the coast and the city of Zaila', a de facto outside from the territory of the

Emirs (who, and among others, never ceased - in conformity with the traditions to claim sovereignty over Zaila' by dint of their being the inheritors of the Muslim State); the edge of the Harari plateau toward the inhabited centre of Dire Dawa (Dire Dabo) on the north, and the outskirts of the little valley of the Hawash up to the ford of Laga Adi (an tributary of the Hawash); and on the west, up to the course of Rammis, an tributary of the Webi, which flows down from the above-mentioned Laga Adi; on the south, toward the Ogaden, where there was, rather than a real and proper boundary, a progressive continuation of the influence of the Harari Emirate on the bedouin Somali tribes. It might be as well to mark that the territory of the Emirate of Harar, defined as such, was comprised of regions considered among the richest in East Africa, at least on the agricultural resources point of view.

This Harari Emirate was organized differently according to each region: a territorial order was in force in all the highland; while in the southern regions (Ogaden), the patrician system was in force. So the countries of the highland were divided into districts whose chiefs were appointed by the Emir and they usually held the title of Garad or Malaq. But in the southern regions, there was a dual hierarchy: a chief of a tribe chosen according to the various Somali customs and rites and another chief appointed by the Emirs. This second appointee had the title of Damin (from the Arabic *Damin* guarantor) and was effectively the guarantor before the Emir regarding the tranquillity and the good order of the tribe. The *Damin* was appointed from amongst able persons who, though living among his own tribe some months of the year, used to have a house and property in the city of Harar and so, he was able to present a collateral security by presenting his own self in front of the Emir. In this manner, the government of the Emirate ignored the chiefs of the bedouin tribes officially and by doing so, gave them free rein administering themselves according to the customs of their own peoples; but demanded due taxes from them through the *Demin* and saw peace imposed among these bedouin tribes, always through the *Demin*, not to loot the highland farmers. This system has been substantially retained up to this very day

because, the Abyssinians, after having conquered the Emirate, also kept the system of *Demin*.

In the south-west of the Abyssinian countries, the order of the neighbouring Christian State, though a secular enemy, appeared as if it were a Goliath matter in the popular tradition, while in the south-west, the order of the Emirate of Harar had immense prestige among the Oromo and the Somali tribes nearby. The Harari titles such as Garad and Malaq have been adopted by the chiefs of Somali tribes; even the very title of Imam (Iman in Somali pronunciation) has come to refer to the hereditary chief of some Somali groups; while Harar appears, in Somali tradition, as the capital of an immensely powerful State, which in reality it never was.

Beside the administrative hierarchy, the Muslim savants had immense authority. They traditionally bore (and still do) the title of Kabir, which is certainly not an Arabic neologism, but derives from the root *kbr*, used in the Semitic Ethiopic in the sense of it «honouring» (whence the Amharic title *Kebur* which is translated into the Ethiopian court protocol as ‘Excellency’, compared to the European titular). Harar used many Qadis, with the judge who first carried the title of Qadi al-Qudhah. And, another local title for local Muslim savants, considered lower than that of *Kabir*, was (and is) *Mumie*. The difference between these two titles is analogous to the one made in Somalia (probably and actually due to the Harari influence) between *Šeh* intending ‘a Muslim learned man’, and *Au*, which means, though having finished the local courses of Muslim studies, has not yet reached the level of having his own pupils.

We have already touched upon the Muslim propagation which started in Harar, pushed its way beyond the limits of the Emirate and benefitted from Muslim brotherhoods, trade and merchants (we remember that for the west Ethiopian Oromo, *naggadie* means both ‘Muslim’ and ‘merchant’), as well as the political prestige of the Emirate itself. The proof of this Harari influence is, for instance, the veneration of the pious Abadir, which we can still see today as far as Limmu Ennaria;<sup>66</sup> the

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. my works, *Etiopia Occidentale*, Vol. I, p. 130.

coexistence of brotherhoods in the west of Ethiopia between the people of Sudanese origin and the Harari ones;<sup>67</sup> the construction of a mosque with the initiative of the Harari Emir in the other Muslim centre of Shekh Hussen (see further in No. 17); the immigration of a group of Argobba from Ifât; the attachments between the confraternal Muslim settlements of southern Somalia and the ones of Harar (see further in No. 17).

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<sup>67</sup> *Etiopia Occidentale*, cit., Vol. II, p. 192.



## § 16 The Egyptian And The Abyssinian Conquest

In the second half of the XIX century, the opening of the Suez Canal drew the attention of the European states to East Africa. The Emirate of Harar presto finds itself involved in events which later ended by terminating the independence of this old Muslim State. Above all, Egypt tried to make sure of benefits of precedence vis-à-vis European states by taking action first; and, during Khedive Isma'il's reign, an armed Egyptian expedition under the command of Ra'uf Pasha entered Harar on 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1875 and obliged Emir Muhammed 'Abd ash-Shakur to consider himself under the protection of the Khedive. The Egyptian administration of Harar lasted for eleven years and has left excellent memories among the Harari people, up to this very date. In fact, Harar saw an orderly government of a modern type for the first time. It came from a government such as the Egypt of Isma'il, who used to enjoy in the East the age-old prestige of being Muslim Egypt, the traditional patron of the Muslims of Ethiopia.

A great part of documents regarding this Egyptian administration is still in Cairo archives today and we hope it will come to be studied and published.<sup>68</sup>

Muhammed Nadi Pasha succeeded Ra'uf in 1880 and 'Ali Ridha Pasha took over in 1882. However, events in Egypt and English expansion in Egypt itself and in East Africa was afoot and thus, the occupation of Harar was now becoming precarious. And Ridhwan Pasha, who succeeded 'Ali Ridha Pasha in 1884, had on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1886, to read a letter signed by the Khedive in which he was to establish the ascent to the throne of the new Emir 'Abdullahi ibn Muhammed and then to evacuate Harar.

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<sup>68</sup> See M. Amer's report, *Some Unpublished Egyptian Maps of Harar*, now published. summarized. in *Congress International De Geographie De Varsovie 1934: Resumes Des Communications*. Warsaw 1934.

In the same year Emir 'Abdullahi had the Italian geographical expedition led by Conte Porro barbarously killed at Harti, near Garaslay, en route to Jaldessa. And so Menelik, the King of Shewa, taking this as a pretext, for his own ends and as the ally of Italy, of retaliating this massacre. He attacked the Emirate and, after a brief and easy engagement at Challanqo on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 1887, he entered Harar and thereafter annexed the city and the Harari State to Shewa. In the beginning, Menelik, sticking to politics he followed in all countries of the south, appointed a new Emir, 'Ali 'Abd ash-Shakur, so that he may continue to rule the country, together with the representative of the King of Shewa; but, after only two or three months, Emir 'Ali was imprisoned and transferred to Shewa; so, the Abyssinian governor, *Dajjazmach*, later Ras Makonnen (the father of the current Negus Haile Sellase) remained behind to rule the country alone.

## § 17     The Harari Islam: Brotherhoods And Rites

It will be suitable now, after this brief mention of the historical evolution of the Harari State, to bring some data regarding Islam in modern Harar together again. First of all, as I have already mentioned above, the propagation move of Harari Islam is based, mainly, on the confraternal Muslim settlements. Currently, the *Qadiriyyah* confraternity has an absolute predominance in the Harari highland. The followers of *Qadiriyyah* have their own *Zawaya*, which are scattered all over the old territory of the Emirate as far as the river Hawash; and the great part of those who administer the confraternity is composed of Somali: at the head of this *Zawiya* (the word *Jema'ah* is preferably used in Harari) of Shabellay, on the east of Harar, we find Shaykh 'Abdullahi ibn Mu'allim Yusuf, a Somali and author of *al-Majmu'ah al-Mubarkah*, a polemical book against the *Salihyyah* confraternity.<sup>69</sup> The *Qadiriyyah* settlements in the west of Ethiopia are filiations of those of Harar and depend on them.<sup>70</sup> We see how Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur had a mosque built at Shekh Hussen named after the godly *Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani*, the founder of *Qadiriyyah*: this also demonstrates the support the Emirs officially gave the confraternity.<sup>71</sup>

I was not able to have any information regarding other Muslim confraternity settlements in Harar, but I believe in the probable existence of some *Ahmadiyyah Zawiyahs*, a confraternity which follows the mystic teachings of Ahmed ibn Idris, who died at Sabya, in 'Asir in the first half of the XIX century, teaching which has diffused as far as southern Somalia, with its centres in the south, at the town of Merca on the Indian Ocean and in the interior *sacred place* of Shekh Hussen.

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<sup>69</sup> Refer to my *Note Sul Movimento Musulmano In Somalia*, in RSO, vol., X, 1923, p. 13.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. *Ethiopia Occidentale*, II, p. 192.

<sup>71</sup> See the following in No. 21.

A matter of particular interest for the history of Islam in Ethiopia is the one of the legal rites. The oldest source we have for this question seems to be al-Dimashqi (b. in 1256 and d. in 1327), who attests the presence of Shafi'ites in Berbera, on the coast of Somalia (see further in No. 18). And some ten years later, al-'Umari, whose work which was written between 1342 and 1349 and which has been cited here, states that the inhabitants of Ifât are mainly Shafi'ites and, their own king is a Shafi'ite as well. He himself, however, attests that the inhabitants of six other Ethiopian Muslim satellites he mentioned, (Dawaro, Arababni, Sharkha, Bali, Dara and Hadyah) are Hanafites. During the following XV century, al-Qalqashandi notes, based on the information had from al-'Umari, that the Ethiopian Muslims follow the Hanafi rite, except those of Ifât where the majority is Shafi'ite, just as their own king.<sup>72</sup>

At a still further date, al-Maqrizi, who compiles the information received from al-'Umari together with his own collected in 1435, writes in a paragraph dedicated to Ifât that 'the majority of the people of Ifât is Shafi'ite, but the Hanafites have increased there in our time'.<sup>73</sup>

Contacts with the neighbouring Hanafite countries have, therefore, increased the number of the minority which adhered to this rite in Ifât in the XV century.

Isolated news regarding the coexistence of Shafi'i rite with that of Hanafi's is found in a tract within a manuscript collected, by myself, in Harar and is entitled: *Kitab an-Nashatayn Li-Salamat ad-Darayn* 'a book of two good pieces of advice for well-being in both worlds'. The author is named Hamid ibn al-Faqih Saddiq al-Harari al-Himyari (he himself was a Hanafite) and this manuscript, which appears to be the autograph of its author, was finished on 28<sup>th</sup> of *Dhu al-Hijjah*, 1178 *Hegira* (= June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1765).

I will keep this point in abeyance; at any rate, this tract

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<sup>72</sup> *Subhal-Asa*, V, 324 (Cairo, 1333-1910): ويتمذهبون بمذهب ابي حنيفة خلاوات فان ملكها وغالب اهلها شافعية

<sup>73</sup> *Kitab al-Ilmam*, cit., p. 7, وكثر فيهم لعهدنا الحنفية

demonstrates the conservation of the Islamic culture in Harar, even in that period of decadence and isolation thrust on the city.

In Harar and in the surrounding regions today, there is an absolute predominance of the followers of the Shafi'ite rite; notwithstanding, a quarter of the city called 'Ammar-Garach the Houses of Ammar', deriving from the name of a certain Shekh 'Ammar, follows the Hanafi rite to this date. This quarter is found nearby Badro Bari, Bab al-Hakim in our documents (see further in No. 23).

I was also told in Harar that a small group of families in the vicinity of *Argob Bari* follows the Hanbali rite to this very day. Albeit, I did not have the means of verifying this piece of news which was given to me by one Harari Muslim savant.

## § 18 The Shi'ite Nucleus In East Africa

Hereunder, I will try to give a succinct account on another interesting matter: did a nucleus Shi'ite group ever exist among Ethiopian Muslims? It is not possible to wonder: and this is because of two clear evidences presented by Arab writers. Ad-Dimishqi writes about Berbera saying<sup>74</sup> «the island of Berbera is inhabited by negro Muslims who follow the Zeidi and the Shafi'ite rites». Therefore, we have a Zeidi group on the Somali coast, in the Gulf of 'Aden.

The Moroccan traveller ibn Battutah, who had visited Zaila' in 1337, says that Zaila' is the capital of the Somali who are black Muslims and are the followers of the Shafi'ite rite, while the inhabitants of the city of Zaila' are instead Shi'ite (*Rafidhah*),<sup>75</sup> mainly.

In the coastal centres, however, and we ought to remember that Zaila' used to be the main port of the State of Ifât, as said before, the Shi'ite community were there in the XIV century: a fact that could have a great deal of importance for the historical knowledge of Ethiopian Islam and of the characters of cultural influences that the Muslim peoples of Ethiopia were able to go through.

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<sup>74</sup> Ed. by Mehren, Peterburg, 1866, (text) p. 162; transl. Mehren, Copenhagen, 1874, p. 218.

<sup>75</sup> *Rihlah* Cairo, 1322, Vol. I, p. 189 ووصلت الي مدينة وهي مدينة البربرة وهم طائفة من السودان شافعية المذهب الخ واهل زيلع سود الالوان واكثرهم رافضة.

## § 19 The Godly Muslims of Harar

The Harari Islam has its own pious men. Among them, the most venerated are two: Emir Nur ibn Mujahid and the godly Shaykh Abadir. Emir Nur is historically renowned and I have had the opportunity of talking about him hereupon. His victory against Negus Glawdewos is probably the cause of his veneration by the Harari. It is evident that this veneration is fairly due to Emir Nur who had achieved his activities in Harar by having the same city as a political centre, unlike the Left-handed Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, whose victories and his own demise in combat should have merited a similar exaltation. But the Left-handed, as has been mentioned before, did not have Harar except as a base of departure and all his undertakings were carried out and achieved away from Harar.

The devout of the Emir remember him in their poems, among which, indeed, the celebration of his military victories predominate: for example (in *tawil* Arabic verses we have one, notwithstanding some irregularities)

صلوة وتسليم وازكى تحية	على احمد المبعوث بالفتح والنصر
توسل بذى الغوث السريع المجاهد	وناصح خلق الله ذا الجاه والقدر
وفاتح بلدان النصاري بسيفه	وناصر جيش المسلمين بلا نكر
وقاطع اعناق المعاند ذي الطغي	وحافظ امر المؤمنين وذى السر
يصول كليث في القتال وجنده	كامواج بحر في الورود وفي الصدر
له همم تعلوا على كل همة	لقد حاز عزا دائما امد الدهر
وزينه بالحق والخلق كاملا	اله البرايا عالم السر والجهر
جزاه اله انه خير من يجزي	لما حصن الحصن المنيع من الضر
فد اله روعي وعيني لانه	عماد الاسلام وحرز من الشر

«A benediction, greetings and sincerest homage to Mohamed, sent (by God) to bring victory and Divine aid!

Intercede [oh Prophet] for whom who is in need, the Fighter in a holy war [Emir Nur], the good counsellor of all creatures of God, the lord

of honour and power;

The conqueror of the Christian countries with his spear, and the defender of the Muslim army without any fear;

The decapitator of necks of the obstinate infidels; protector of the power of Believers; owner of the (mystic) secret!

He hurls himself like a lion in a battle and his army is like sea waves against veins and chests (of the enemy).

He has a purpose loftier than any purpose; he is the lord of any power that shall last for the duration of time;

Was made perfect in physical traits and in that of character by the God of creatures who is aware of secrets and the manifested ones;

Reward him oh God; he is the best among the rewarded, 'cause fortified he did the fortress and has kept it indeed immune against mishaps.<sup>76</sup>

I to him my soul offer and my eyes too, 'cause to Islam a column he is and a talisman against any evil indeed».

We have but still another song in which the Lord is more explicitly invoked (still in *tawil* Arabic verses with some errors):

بحرمة من اسس حسن بلادنا	وشيد دين الله نجل مجاهد
وجاهد جهدا لا يطاق مثاله	يطالب مرضات الا له المعاند
واخزى النصارى بالسيوف القواطع	وذلل من قد كان يعلوا بفساد

«For his sake [Emir Nur] who has founded the beauty of our country and thus has fortified the religion of God, the progeny of a combatant:<sup>77</sup>

He fought a fight that is not possible to have a peer for, and has elicited from the recalcitrant all that satisfies the Lord;

He has refuted the Christians with smiting swords and has

<sup>76</sup> A reference to the wall of Harar. See further in No. 23.

<sup>77</sup> Or, playing with words, 'the progeny of Mujahid'. (Emir Nur was the son of Wazir Mujahid).



brought the prince of corruption to his knees».<sup>78</sup>

While a long Harari song written in Arabic characters invokes for Emir Nur as follows:

نب اوج زليط ول نوروا الله مرحيما  
 نب دينوا حف ذانوا ول نور الله مرحيما  
 كافر دينوا سس ذانوا ول نور الله مرحيما

The one who has followed the path of the Prophet, the pious (wali) Nur; Oh God be compassionate with him! The one who has elevated the religion of the Prophet, the pious Nur; Oh God be compassionate with him! The one who has debased the religion of the infidels, the pious Nur; Oh God be compassionate with him!

The grave of Emir Nur ibn Mujahid is to be found at a hilly quarter of Harar, in the middle of Fandala (Bab al-Futuh) gate, the street to the French Hospital and the houses of Emir 'Abdullahi. It is enshrined with a protruding structured Qubbah, which has 'monkey heads' dotted to the outside, namely, the heads of crosspieces of support which protrude from the wall. The type of its construction is, therefore, the same as those venerated tombs which are found in Bali, in Shekh Hussen.<sup>79</sup> Emir Nur's shrine has a «guardian» who has been chosen amongst the '*Ulama*' of Harar and he is in charge of running the pilgrimage and the ceremonies which are carried out there. The anniversary of the pious Nur's death falls in the (Muslim) month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* which is called *Nadi Mawlud* in Harari.

<sup>78</sup> Regarding the third, verse, as has been brought to my own attention by G. Levi della Vida, it would have been better, for the sake of rhyme, to read. the last as *بفساد*, whereas the sense of the verse instead calls for *بفساد*, according to the manuscript.

<sup>79</sup> See my work: *Le Popolazioni Dell'alto Bacino Del Uabi*, in Luigi Amedeo di Savoia Austa's, *L'esploarazione Del Uabi-Uebi Scebeli*, Milan (Mondadori.) 1932.

## § 20 The Pious Shekh Abadir

Beside Emir Nur, the pious Shekh Abadir is venerated in Harar. But nothing certain is known about the historical personality of this godly man. A piece of news gathered by Paulitschke<sup>80</sup> singles out the pious Abadir as the one who introduced Islam in the region first. However, it was told to me, rather, that Abadir had lived in the very early period of the foundation of the city of Harar. The religious recitations which reverberate praises of Abadir do not seem to contain specific historical references. In Harar, I have had, for a very brief period of time, the possibility of having a look at a manuscript (in Arabic) which bore the title: *Kitab Fath al-Qadir Fi Manaqib al-Imam as-Shaykh Abadir*.<sup>81</sup> The author of this book is a certain Yusuf ibn Sharif Muhammed Sufyan. He wrote, as has been said in the preface of this book, in answer to the invitation extended by Emir Ahmed ibn Muhammed (who reigned between 1794 to 1821); and his work was completed on Monday in the month of *Jumad at-Thani*, 1218 *Hegira* (18<sup>th</sup> December-18<sup>th</sup> October, 1803). So it is a very late compilation, but most probably it is worthwhile to examine it closer than I had been able to, and above all, to stand if it contains some historical hints. We cannot help noticing that Abadir is called 'Umar Abadir in the premise of the book.<sup>82</sup>

Therefore, the name Abadir could cause some doubt. He is not of Arab origin and hence appears to be of a local one. Albeit, the current conditions of our knowledge of the medieval history of Ethiopia do not let us have except a remembrance - out of sheer curiosity - of the name Abadir, which corresponds to the Coptic *Apater*, the sainted Christian

<sup>80</sup> P. Paulitschke, *Harar, Forschungstreise Nach Den Somal-Und Oromolandern Ost-Afrikas*, Leipsig, 1888, p. 215.

<sup>81</sup> *Libro Della Rivelazione Dell'onnipotente Sui Prodigii Dell'imam shaykh Abadir*.

<sup>82</sup> «شيخ وراء اقليم الحبشة سيما مدينة الهرر ونواحيها ولي الله بلانزع ولانزع الشيخ عمر ابادر» The Shaykh of beyond Abyssinian area and especially in the city of Harar and its surroundings, the godly one without neither rebuttal or contestation, is Shaykh 'Umar Abadir.»

martyr, about whom there also are Ethiopic records.<sup>83</sup> I must add, on the other hand, that this is but a probability, as well as a casual coincidence. The Muslim name 'Umar, which has been given to Abadir in the above-mentioned book corresponds to the common habit of the Muslims of East Africa, in which they used to Islamize one with the name of one of their old traditional heroes, added to his own, which is given to him then as a simple surname usually one of their own local ones, to start with, as for example, from one of Somali ancestors. Somal in Arab-Somali documents is tantamount to calling one Muhammed, but surnamed Somal 'because he pulled out the (Samala), his own brother's eye'. Anyhow, it is really odd, even if coincidental, that the oldest pious Harari Muslim, Abadir, should have had a name which was also the name of a martyr who is venerated by the Abyssinian Christian Church.

The shrine of Abadir is in Harar. And I was not able to see it during my stay in Harar; but its photograph is found in Bricchetti Robecchi's book.<sup>84</sup> A brief Oromo text concerning Abadir can be read in the same book. In this text, it is not only do we not come across any information of any particular interest, but worse still, because we are but left with confirmations that forces us to doubt if its author was really a Muslim: for example: *waqa gadi abadirra ka irrafatu injiru* (Bricchetti Robecchi's transcription). Instead, it has to be read: *waqa gadi abadirra kan irrafatu hinjiru* «under God, there is nobody who is above Abadir» and the final phrase which Bricchetti Robecchi paraphrases on p. 135 and which sounds as (correcting the transcription directly) *wanni balbala duratti katabame gari naqasatti-fi ulfinasatti hima garimmo dinniko ha-kufu kan wa gabbaru wan gargara* «the thing that is written in front of the door of Abadir's shrine: one part says his name (Abadir) and the veneration due to Him; and the other one then 'Down with my religion! him that has offered something, help him will I with something the more'.

<sup>83</sup> *Acta Martyrum*, by Esteves Pereira, published and translated, Paris [Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium], 1907, p. 167, text, p. 147, translation. Abadir is a name used in Christian Abyssinia: so used to be called one of the brothers of Negus Malak Saggad's, for example.

<sup>84</sup> *Nell'Harar*, Milano, 1896, p. 135.

I do not need to say what this type of oath *dinniko ha-kufu* ‘Down with my religion!’ would mean for a Muslim except its being a horrendous blasphemy.

Nevertheless, having an experience with the Harari’s effective veneration of Abadir, suffice it to say that in the recitations manuscripted in Harari, in Arabic characters though, about which I have mentioned when I talked about Emir Nur, above anything else God is invoked, then the Prophet, and then the four Caliphs, and immediately after, the same formula goes to Abadir.

«For the sake of Abadir, oh God, be *أبادر حرمندوبى يا إلهي* *ترحمنا* compassionate with us!». We have already seen the verses (in Arabic) which have been cited in the beginning of this introduction of how Abadir is considered the glory of Harar. In the Harari Hymn, he has the appellation of *زباد لؤلؤ* Zibad Lu'lu', the ‘pearl of the country’».

## § 21 Other Holy Men

After these invocations, through the intercession of Emir Nur and Abadir, other minor godly personalities are mentioned in the same Harari hymn. They are: Hamdogñ; Au 'Izzin; and Shaykh Hashim. Regarding Hamdogñ, a Harari abbreviation of Hamdullah, I do not have any information. The godly Au 'Izzin, whose name is abbreviated from 'Izz ad-Din, could probably be, temporarily speaking, identified with Prince 'Izz ad-Din, the brother of Imam Adrah of Aussa. This prince, i.e., 'Izz ad-Din, was killed on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1621, while fighting against Warday Oromo and, therefore, is a martyr according to the Muslim concept.<sup>85</sup> Lastly, the godly Shaykh Hashim was already an object of veneration in the XVI century because, a historic footnote pertaining to a certain event occurring in Harar on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1559 says about a place, nearby Harar, named «the Land of our lord Hashim».<sup>86</sup>

Bricchetti Robecchi<sup>87</sup> forwards the name of a certain godly «Au Rahman» (maybe Au 'Abd al-Rahman?), whose remains are venerated in Harar. I personally have not gathered any information on this.

The veneration of another godly Ethiopian Muslim is also diffused in Harar, though not of Harari origin: the famous Shekh Hussen, or rather, Shekh Nur Hussen of Bali. I have already profusely talked about him and the pilgrimage rites in his honour elsewhere. The pilgrimage of the Harari to Shekh Hussen cannot be something recent because, one of the mosques called after 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani was, as a matter of fact built by Emir 'Abd al-Shakur, who reigned in Harar from 1783 to 1794.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., p. 83.

<sup>86</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., p. 91.

<sup>87</sup> *Nell'Harar*, cit., p. 131.

<sup>88</sup> Refer to the previous No. 17.

## § 22 The Mosques of Harar

The most important mosque of Harar, which is indeed called Jama (the Harari pronunciation for al-Jami), was destroyed by the Abyssinians<sup>89</sup> after their conquest of Harar in 1886; and in the very place, the then Dajjazzmach Makonnen's plan, drafted by Engineer Bricchetti Robecchi, was for a monophysite Christian church built in 1888. Another Harari mosque is the one named the Conqueror (Sahib al-Fat'h), i.e., the Left-handed Ahmed ibn Ibrahim's. This mosque which is the most important one in Harar and, therefore, which assumed the name Jama, has two minarets. The popular tradition<sup>90</sup> holds that one of the two had miraculously sprung up from the ground. The Infidel Abyssinians are supposed to have twice destroyed the minaret, and twice, the minaret would miraculously spring up.

Within the building of al-Jami' Mosque, and on the door of the monumental door, (which appears to have the name of al-Suhayli), we can see according to a note contained in one of the manuscripts I have collected in Harar - the following Arabic inscription in verses of Hafif metre (put there during Emir Ahmed ibn Abu-Bakr's reign):

ملك العصر قد بنيت المعالى	ما عس ان يكون جدر وسطع
غير ان المنير يزهاوا بهاء	بمحيًا ضيائه منك صبح
قلت أقمت اقتفي اثر قوم	ارخوا كي يكون ذلك نجح
فاذا شئت خذ حسابك فاعدد	لك نصر من القدوس وفتح

Prof. Giorgio Levi Della Vida, to whom I showed this inscription some years back, kindly volunteered to give me the following

<sup>89</sup> So the mosque used, to exist still in the epoch of Paulitschke's trip, who had even published its photograph on p. 207 of his mentioned book; while the photograph of the Minaret alone was again published by Robecchi on p. 160 of his book.

<sup>90</sup> Refer further in part II, 'the modern Harari', text No. 3.

translation:<sup>91</sup>

King of (our) time, you have built (in the manner of) lofty buildings which could have resulted in a wall and a ceiling.<sup>92</sup>

But this minaret<sup>93</sup> shines and glows with a facade whose splendour at dawn is the one that (comes) from you.

I have said:<sup>94</sup> I was bent on imitating the example of those who have made history so that in it there might be prosperity.

So, if you wish, make your calculations and count: ‘thrust upon you is the victory and also the conquest from the part of the Divine (God)!’<sup>95</sup>

The last part is a chronogram: **للك نصر من القدوس وفتح** which has the numerical value of 50 + 340 + 50 + 201 + 494 and this adds up to a total of 1175.

The year 1175 *Hegira* (= 1761 - 1762) is, therefore, the date of the inscription, which, as a matter of fact, and according to my own manuscript itself, had been laid during Emir Ahmed ibn Abu Bakr’s reign. He is the one who reigned in Harar between 1169 and 1197 (= 1755 - 1782) and the inscription attests to how, during his reign, albeit after two centuries of isolation from the Muslim world, the Arabized culture did not at all decline in Harar.

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<sup>91</sup> And the vocalization is also by G. L. D. V.

<sup>92</sup> The poet praises the Emir because he had had the minaret built with magnificence, which would have been mediocre.

<sup>93</sup> منير suitably means ‘the one that illuminates’. (Notes belonging to G.L.D.V.).

<sup>94</sup> The word قلنت is not read clearly in the manuscript. (An annotation made by G.L.D.V.)

<sup>95</sup> To the fourth verse, the metre would entail to be read as القدس with the non-geminated D, which would nevertheless be an incorrect form (an annotation made by G.L.D.V.).

### § 23 The Gates of Harar

The city of Harar is surrounded by a circular wall, which has small towers with platforms at the top for the purpose of defence. This wall is Emir Nur ibn Mujahid's work, and though having evidently been repaired more than once, it has probably retained its ancient character.<sup>96</sup> Nowadays, signs of dilapidation are here and there - also because of fiscal and sanitary reasons - no matter how it is being tried, to keep it erect still.

The wall has several gates for opening the city (the gates are closed at curfew hours to this very day). These gates have changed their names more than once during the history of Harar. In addition to the Harari names, Somali or Oromo names have been added to some gates, and Abyssinian names to the others which carried names given by the Egyptians during their dominion of Harar. Since the identification of the city gates in historical documents is important for the topography of the city, I here below give the names of these various gates according to how I collected them during my stay in Harar and after having been counselled by the Harari elders:

Harari name	Amharic name	Arabic name (In the documents)	Oromo name
Suqutat bari	Sanga barr	Bab as-Salam	Barri bisidmo
Argob bari	Yarar barr	Bab ar-Rahman	
Assum bari	Fallana barr	Bab al-Futuh	
Asma-addin bari	Shawa barr	Bab al-Turk Bab al-Nasr	
Badro bari	Buda barr	Bab al-Hakim	Barri hammarressa

The Somalis call Assum Bari, Fandala.

The Harari name for the first gate, Suqutat, is not easily

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<sup>96</sup> Hymns in honour of Emir Nur repeatedly allude to the building of the wall of the city, as we have already seen above in No. 19.



explained; the corresponding name means ‘the Gate of Ox’; the Arabic name means ‘the Gate of Health’; and the Oromo name means ‘the Bisidimo Gate’ after the country that leads the caravan route which leaves the city.

The Harari name for the second gate means ‘the Gate of the Argobba’; the Amharic name is ‘the Gate of Yarar’ after the name of the Webi tributary towards whose valley the caravans make for; and the Arabic name is the ‘Gate of Compassion’.

The Harari name for the third gate means ‘the Gate of Salt’ (it is admirable because it retains the ancient form of the Harari name for salt, which, therefore, confirms the passage from the Somali *obso* and the Guraghie *asum* to the current Harari *assu*). The explanation which has been given by Paulitschke<sup>97</sup> for this name as ‘the Gate of Axum’ is not absolutely acceptable: because and above anything else, it contradicts the local tradition which has been hinted at by myself, and to crown it all, because, it would be really strange to find the name Axum in Harar to indicate Abyssinia; the Amharic name is ‘the Gate of Fallana’ Fallana in Oromo means *wooden spoon* and evidently, the Somali must have understood this Amharic connotation because, they name this gate *Fandala* in their own language *the one of wooden spoons*. I am however, unaware if there really exists any specific market in the vicinity of the gate where wooden articles are sold or it is only just a matter of a popular etymology; the Arabic name means ‘the Gate of Conquests’.

The Harari name for the fourth gate means ‘the Gate of Asma' ad-Din’ after a person bearing this name. A certain Garad Asma' ad-Din had betrayed his king, Muhammed ibn Nasir, during the war against Negus Malak Saggad in 1576-77, while later on, a certain Emir named Ahmed-Din ibn Garad Asma' ad-Din ruled the Muslim State with its capital of Aussa between 1589 to 1590. An annotation which I had published regarding a certain Oromo raid gives the name of this gate in Asma'ad-Din's writing but, it is an error committed by the amanuensis,

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<sup>97</sup> 145 *Harar forschungsreise etc. cit.*, p. 204

who is evidently not used to distinguishing between *hamzah* and *'ayn*, which are confused in Harari pronunciation; the Amharic name means the Gate of Shewa; and the Arab names the Gate of the Turk as well as gate of Divine Aid. The Harari name for the fifth gate is not discernible, unless it is supposed to be understood, as the Gate of Badr ad-Din after the name of a person who is not known otherwise; the Amharic name is the Gate of *Buda*—werewolf, the Arab name is Gate of the Governor or else the Gate of al-Hakim, a name of a mountain in the outskirts of Harar; the Oromo name is the Gate of Hammarressa, after the name of a stream which is crossed by caravans at a distance of about two hours from Harar.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> I am presenting here under the names I collected and their respective explanations. Regarding the gates of Harar, refer also to M. De Coppet's. *Chronique De, Guebre Sellasie*, Paris, 1925, p. 246-7; R. P. Azais and R. Chambard's *Cinq Annees De Recherches Archeologiques En Ethiopie*, Paris, 1931, p. 8. Both Azais as well as Marcel Cohen (Etudes, cit., p. 313) have collected *Badbo Bari* instead of *Badro Bari*, a name given to me by my informants.

**8. THE SIDAMO ETHNIC GROUP AND THE  
MUSLIM STATE OF BALI<sup>+</sup>**

**SUMMARY:**

1. The Sidamo ethnic group and their old seat in the region of Bali
2. The boundaries of the Muslim State of Bali
3. The Ethiopian route to the Indian Ocean across Bali and the Webi Valley
4. Islam in Bali and its characteristics: sources
5. The polemic among the Muslims of Bali on the lawfulness of beer and honey-mead
6. The consumption of Chat and its lawfulness
7. The relationship between Arabia and the Muslim Bali: the Tanbih of ash-Shirazi
8. The relationship between Somalia and the Muslim Bali: Sheikh 'Ali Maye of Merca
9. The juridical Muslim schools of Bali
10. Bali during XV century and the Abyssinian military colonization
11. Bali and the Muslim invasion of the XVI century
12. Bali and the invasion of Oromo
13. The Sidamo and the Oromo ethnic groups in Bali
14. The situation of the Sidamo ethnic groups after the invasion of the Oromo
15. Sheikh Hussen and the guerrilla warfare amongst the peoples of Bali

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<sup>+</sup> [E. Cerulli, *Studi Etiopici*, Vol. II, Rome, Istituto per l'Oriente, pp. 1-37].

## **§ 1    The Sidamo Ethnic Group And Their Old Seat In The Region of Bali**

The Sidamo people today live on the mountains that represent the watershed between the basin of Juba, Webi and Regina Margherita Lake. They extend themselves, from one part, to the higher valleys of Juba and its tributaries as well; while on the other part, they reach the north-eastern bank of Regina Margherita Lake and the banks of Lake Awasa.

The territory of the Sidamo people, relatively narrow, is however a real natural fortress compared to the neighbouring populations', because the mountains - which are an impregnable refuge per se - are also protected when one moves from one basin to the other by extended forests and vast savannahs, which on their part extend themselves on their own strata and pave the way for springs with numerous water courses. This very configuration of Sidamo territory poses a quick query about the historical origin of that population, because it is only natural to ask ourselves about places and why the Sidamo population had to be driven out to an inaccessible and so limited an area, where we find them today.

The Sidamo historical traditions and those of the Oromo are unanimous in affirming that the Sidamo people had their own primitive seat in Bali, from where they were driven away by the Oromo at the start of the great Oromo invasion of the Ethiopian highland (in the XVI century). And from Bali, withdrawing ever toward the west and onto the mountains, under pressure from the Oromo, the Sidamo people reached their current territory.

The history of the Sidamo ethnic group is, therefore, traced up to the XVI century at least, in the territory of Bali where they were its inhabitants.

## § 2      **The Boundaries of The Muslim State of Bali**

Bali was a Muslim state, according to unanimously affirmed Arab and Ethiopian historical documents from the XIII to XVI centuries. I will hereunder unify some new documents on Islam during the kingdom of Bali, and thus clarify the outcome compared to what has been known hitherto.

Above all we ought to specify that the Muslim State of Bali was widely extended between Webi (in Oromo and Sidamo: Wabi<sup>1</sup>) on the north and Ganale<sup>2</sup>, (today: Ganale Doria) on the south. We can say that all documents agree on this extension, even though some erroneous interpretations of texts up to now (especially due to the dearth of geographical knowledge of this region) had attributed different borders to Bali.

The northern border of Bali, therefore, was marked by the Webi river. Webi separated Bali from Dawaro, according to Futuh's passages, as has been cited here above.<sup>3</sup> Bali, according to al-'Umari,<sup>4</sup> has a common border with Hadiya. Therefore, we have to imagine - at least for the XIII century - a noteworthy extension toward the south of Hadiya up to the inclusion of countries we call Kambatta today and another extension toward the west of Bali till one reaches the region of Lakes just on the south of Zeway, the border with Hadiya.

Toward the north-east, instead, Bali - according to Futuh - was separated from the Country of Sa'd ad-Din (that is to say from the Muslim State of Ifât-Harar-Aussa) by the Land of Galb, Muslim too, which

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<sup>1</sup> Webi is a Somali name.

<sup>2</sup> Ganale is a Oromo name (which comes to be pronounced in Amharic as well as *Gannale*). The Somali name is Ganana.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. here above, p 289.

<sup>4</sup> Al-'Umari, *Masalik El-Absar Fi Mamalik al-Amsar*, Vol. I: *L'Afrique Moins L'Egypte*, transl. by Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Paris 1927, p. 18.

extended as far as Webi.<sup>5</sup> This boundary between Bali and the Muslim State of Ifât has also been confirmed by Jesuit missionaries. As a matter of fact D'Almeida writes<sup>6</sup> of *reino de adel, a que nos chamamos de zeila, que com baly confina*. We notice that, according to the map belonging to the British General Staff, the region on the east of the Galamo mountains (on the north-east of the territory of Bali) is called *Dangazeila* today, which - if this name is correct - can be explained and linked with the Oromo Danga Zaila', the boundary of Zaila'. The memory of neighbourhood this state had with its port at Zaila' and its territory frequented by the caravans, which left Bali and made a bee-line for the sea, has remained a sheer toponym. We have to mark too that the name *Zaila'* must have retained its Arabic form (which is really *Zaila'*, but neither Oromo nor Sidamo ethnic groups have the 'ayn anymore) and not in the current Oromo form *Aftali*.

On the south, as we have said, Bali extended as far as Ganale, (and that is to the higher course of Juba), to which Bottego adds the name Doria during his memorable exploration. This southern border of Bali appears clearly in the Ethiopic History of The Oromo (of the XVI century) which gives us the first act of hostility on behalf of the Oromo as being the crossing of the Galana River, their own border with Bali.<sup>7</sup> So this sense will have to correct information supplied by Mons. Taurin de Cahagne,<sup>8</sup> who had identified the southern border of Ball with the river Dawa. This identification has been contradicted, as we have seen in the *History of The Oromo*; and also is in contrast with the current situation, by still having today Ganale Doria as a border between Borana and the populations of Bali.

On the west, Bali, according to al-'Umari,<sup>9</sup> has a common border with Hadiya. But al-Maqrizi, who in 839 *Hegira* (1435-1436) had the

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<sup>5</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, Vol. I (text), pp. 153-154; Vol. II (transl.), p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum Scriptores*, V, p. 474. Cf. also, *Ibid.*, VI, p 255.

<sup>7</sup> Ed. by Guidi: (text) p. 223, (transl.) p. 195.

<sup>8</sup> *D'Abbadie, Geographie D'Ethiopie*, p. 304,

<sup>9</sup> *Cit., Wor.*, p. 18.

opportunity to collect new data from Ethiopian pilgrims, and who after having reproduced al-'Umari's passage, omitted the relative indication to Hadiya. In the writings of Jesuit missionaries Bali instead borders Kambatta, thus meeting the then main States of southern Ethiopia: *Narea Pela Parte De Sudueste, Cambate Pela Do Sul, Bally Pela De Sueste*.<sup>10</sup> And this proves the change of the political status of countries lying to the west of Bali during and between the XIII and XVI centuries, in the sense that the southern regions which in 1200 were within the kingdom of Hadiya soon became independent in the XVI century under the name Kambatta. And this sheds new light on the history of Hadiya, and explains the maximum extension it enjoyed (in the XIII century) from the highland and on the immediate western part of Hawash, which is held by *Cabo Oromo*<sup>11</sup> today, as far as Omo and the Lakes region to the south of Zeway in modern Kambatta. We, therefore, have also to modify the hypothesis I formulated another time<sup>12</sup> that Gudiella was the most immediate region to the south of Hadiya, because Gudiella did not actually become the immediate border on the south of Hadiya except after its separation from Kambatta.

We also have to note that another manuscript of history, according to D'Almeida, specifies that Ennaraya too (Narea for the Portuguese) was on the border of Bali' (*pela parte do susueste narea se avoishinha ao mesmo*).<sup>13</sup> This information as well, though hypothetical, will give full rein to the assumption of the width of the Ennaraya kingdom toward the Omo Valley which is much more on the south-west of the current Limmu Ennaraya. We do understand that this could have been interpreted too, not so much as an effective extension of territorial boundaries, but as evidence of a hegemony that the then Ennaraya -albeit under the Abyssinian supremacy which had been recently affirmed during

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<sup>10</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum*, VI, p. 403.

<sup>11</sup> Hadiya's location in these regions are backed by traces I personally saw during my trips. See *Etiopia Occidentale*, Vol. II, p. 167.

<sup>12</sup> *Sidama orientali*, p. 607 (11<sup>th</sup> extract).

<sup>13</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum*, VI, p. 403, note 1.

Malak Saggad's reign - exercised on other Sidama states. In more recent times Kaffa has substituted Ennaraya in this position of hegemony over the Sidama groups; and this caused similar mistakes among travellers who have attributed an exonerated territorial extension to Kaffa by also including the neighbouring mini-states within the kingdom of Kaffa.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Regarding all see also *Etiopia Occidentale*, Vol. I, chapters IX, XII and XXI.



### § 3      **The Ethiopian Route To The Indian Ocean Across Bali And The Webi Valley**

The region of Bali, so defined had its own important function; because it was of use (and still is today) as a crossing-bridge between the Ethiopian highland and the countries lying on the coasts of the Indian Ocean. Let us see here how these contacts made by Bali with regions that constitute the Italian Somaliland today have had interesting consequences in the religious culture of Bali Muslims. The confirmations made by Jesuit Missionaries pertaining to the Ethiopian route across Bali to the Indian Ocean are unanimous; and two endeavours have actually been made making use of this particular route: the trip made by father Antonio Fernandez S. I. in 1613 and the one made by Padri Giovanni da Velasco and Gerolamo Lobo S. I. in 1624.

Father Fernandez, as is known, first tried to reach the Indian Ocean across Ennaraya and Kaffa, the route which appeared to be the shortest according to his information (we instead know today that it was the farthest route). He was not able to cross because of the opposition of the Ennaraya chief, who - as had been well understood by P. Fernandez was afraid that permitting the exploration of a route toward the ocean would have paved the way for the Portuguese invasion of Ethiopia. To appease this fear, F. Fernandez therefore, sought passage through Bali *posto que via ser este caminho muito desviado* (it was instead the shortest route). He thought, by passing through Bali, *ir demandar a costa do mar com hum grande rodeo perto do capo darfui coasi no meo entre esta ponta e magadaxo*<sup>15</sup> (instead he should have really reached the ocean not in between Guardafui and Mogadishu, but through one further to the south in between Mogadishu and Brava). But our Fernandez, despite his intrepid trip across Jangero and Kambatta, was not even able to enter Bali.

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<sup>15</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum*, VI t p. 255.

F. Giovanni da Velasco and F. Lobo had tried, but through the opposite route, to leave the coast of the Indian Ocean and make for Ethiopia; alas! this tentative as well ended in a complete fiasco. Father Manoel D'Almeida S. I., while telling us about this new and daring tentative, specifies that from Pate or from Mogadishu to Ethiopia there are five or six different degrees of latitude as well as from two other places (Ennaraya and Bali) *se hao de andar pelo rumo de noroeste quarta do norte partindo de magadaxo pera baly ou pelo de oesnoroeste, pouco mas ou menos, querendo ir pera narea.*<sup>16</sup>

And D'Almeida himself in a more specific passage which, as we are going to see has great historical importance, declares that: *este espacio de costa [between Guardafui and Mogadishu] he a que mais vizinha com as terras do imperio, digo que antigamente forao do imperio, come o reino baly, do qual a costa, indo a sueste como dizia, nao pode aver mais de cem legias.* Therefore, Bali is the nearest Ethiopian country to the Indian Ocean, according to D'Almeida: and this datum not only corresponds to the geographical reality, but also - as the cultural and religious influxes mentioned above prove it - to effective contacts between Bali Muslims and the Arab commercial settlements on the coast of the Indian Ocean.

I would like to add here that, one century prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, a certain Italian scholar, the Venetian Alessandro Zorzi, was interested in collecting pieces of information from Abyssinians who happened to be in Venice regarding the route from Ethiopia to the Indian Ocean. And the Abyssinians correctly indicated to him the route across the valley of Webi, that is, across the Kingdom of Bali. This is, if I am not mistaken, the very first news heard in Europe about the river called Webi<sup>17</sup> which has remained unpublished up to this very day: «another great river which is not less than the Nile [,] where there are awe inspiring mountains

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<sup>16</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum*, VI, p. 403.

<sup>17</sup> *Biblioteca Nazionale Firenze, Magliabechiano Manuscript*, catalogued today as Cl. XIII, 84 (f. 70 v-71 r).

lying on the fourth latitude from the equatorial toward the Antarctic Pole [,] where and when the sun is at Cancer there is severe cold and snow [:] and thus having the birth of 50 degrees longitude regarding the province of Adia and the swift whirling of the North wind above the province of Teso, the province of Voge, the province of Guraghe and so much so between the provinces of Damot and Naria through the province of Conce only to enter the province of Gange and ends up in the Ocean from the eastern side through multiple openings and down to the town called Quiloa which is subjugated by the Portuguese [.] The river called Ubi receives many other rivers and streams from the right as much as from the left which all form a great river [.] and from this place to the Combaia, ships that arrive at the aforesaid parts as, do the Portuguese ['] and a great deal of merchants go to Barara [in Shewa] on land which is a shorter route than the one of Zelo [= Zaila']».

As we can see Zorzi's informant made the departure of the course of Webi from a point further to the south: the river should have made a very large curve toward the north till it reached the countries of Sidama and Hadiya and for a wonder the Ennaraya and subsequently, with another large curve, it would have reached the Indian Ocean through Kilwa, Quiloa for the Portuguese, the capital of the Sultanate which exercised an effective hegemony on many parts of the eastern African coast during the XIV-XV centuries until the arrival of the Portuguese.<sup>18</sup>

We ought to note that Zorzi, who had come one century after D'Almeida, says that the route for Webi (that is the one of Bali) is the shortest communicating line between southern Ethiopia and the Ocean. His informant, instead, is presumptuous enough to exaggerate to the point of saying that the Zaila' route is longer than that of Webi!

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<sup>18</sup> Should a need arise for an example, refer to my review about Gabriel Ferrand, *Les Sultans De Kilwa*, in *Oriente Moderno*, X, 1930, pp. 284-288 (now reprinted in Somalia, cit., Vol. I, p. 125-126).

#### § 4      Islam In Bali And Its Characteristics: Sources

The State of Bali was Muslim and has retained Islam up to this very day. Now let us see the main characteristics of the historical diffusion of Islam in Bali.

Allow me to make use of new and unpublished sources. Some years ago I mentioned<sup>19</sup> three tracts published in Cairo by the Muslims of Ethiopia on the life and the miracles of the godly Sheikh Hussen who is the most important godly man of the Muslims of Bali and who is also the most venerated personage in all southern and western Ethiopia.<sup>20</sup> Three tracts, which I believe are practically unavailable, bear the title of:

1. *Kitab Rab'i al-Qulub Fi Thikr Manaqib Wa-Fada'il Sayyidina ash-Shaykh Nur Husayn*(the Spring Book of Hearts on the Reminiscence of Virtues and Merits of our lord Sheikh Nur Husayn);
2. *Kitab Nuzhat al-Asrar Wa-Taharat al-Awzar* (Book of the Pleasure of Souls and the Purity from Turpitude);
3. *Nisbat Ash-Sharif* (the Genealogy of a Sharif).

Naturally, these pious stories are not to be considered a historical document in the rigorous sense of the word; but one cannot - in my own point of view - deny them value due, because they are giving us, though through distortions, an oral tradition which could be old enough and, nevertheless, still are considered as the characteristics of the Ethiopian lifestyle atmosphere, because they allow us to have a glimpse of problems

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<sup>19</sup> *Pubblicazioni Recenti Dei Musulimani E Dei Cristiani Dell'etiopia*, in OM, VIII, 1928, pp. 429-432.

<sup>20</sup> See here above, pp. 104-107; *Etiopia Occidentale*, I, pp. 17-18, 95-98, 129; II, 190-193; and my memorandum *Le Popolazioni Del Bacino Superiore Del Uabi Scebeli In Somalia*, cit., vol - II, p. 134 and after. pp. 135-140 actually refer to rites practised during the pilgrimage to Sheikh Hussen.

that specially worried, and still do, Islam in the southern countries of Ethiopia.

## § 5 The Polemic Among The Muslims of Bali On The Lawfulness of Beer And Honey-Mead

Up to this very day the Muslim Oromo and Sidama groups keep looking for the reconciliation of the very diffused consumption of beer and honey-mead in their respective regions with the precepts of the Muslim religion.

At Jimma, for example, it is normal for beer brewed à la Oromo *farso* to be considered *halal*. The followers of Muslim Fraternity keep fighting this type of belief. Not only once but twice did the tracts of Sheikh Hussen<sup>21</sup> discuss and argue this problem.

The first time the Sheikh tells of the answer his own father had given about this question:

قد اجتمع معه فقيه حنفي فتحدثنا في امر المذر فقال المذر حرام محض فقال الحنفي حلال بلا شك ولا ريب فتراجعا بالكلام مليا وطال عليهم الجدل ثم قال والدي للفقير فهل لك ان تدعو الله تعالى ان يأتينا من يشهد على صحة ما اختلفنا ويفصل بيننا بالحق حتى يتبين المحق من المبطل في هذه الساعة قبل ان نتفرق فلبثنا قليلا حتى مرت امرأة على ظهرها طفل صغير فوقفت بحذاءهما تسمع خطابهما ثم قالت لهما على ما تختصمان وتتجادلان فقال والدي على المذر فانا اقول المذر حرام وصاحبي هذا يقول المذر حلال ثم قالت الا انبئكما بأمر جرى على فيما تقولون قال لها بلى قالت ان هذا الطفل الذي تربيانه احملة على ظهرى فانه ولد ولدي مني بمواقعة على مكرهة وهو سكران من هذا المذر الذى تختلفان في تحليله وتحريمه فما خروجي من بيتى وحركتى الا ان استفتي العلماء هل رأوا احد أصابه مثل ما اصابني من البلاء والمعصية وهل يحل لي قتله أم لا وكيف اصنع فعند ذلك تعجب الفقيه فبهت من عجب ما سمعه من مقالته ثم قال الان لا شيء بعد هذا البيان وانى لا اسكن في بلد يتخذ فيها المذر

A Hanafi erudite (Faqih) had a meeting with him during which they argued about beer. He (my father) said: «Beer is absolutely *haram*». And the Hanafite: “It is without an iota of doubt or hesitation, *halal*”.

<sup>21</sup> I will have to write here and within this book the spelling «Hussen» according to the Somali pronunciation.

«And so they kept on correcting each other for a long time and their argument seemed to be reaching an impasse. Thereafter my father ventured to say to the (Hanafite) Faqih: “Could you pray to the Highest Lord to send us somebody who would testify to the truthfulness of what we are disputing and give us his fair verdict, so that we may distinguish between who is on the right path and who is on the wrong one now and in this very moment, before we part from one another?».

«They delayed themselves for a while until a woman, who had a little baby on her back, happened to pass by. She stopped in front of them to hear what they were talking about. Then she asked them: «What are you engaged in controversy about?». My father said: «about beer. I say that beer is *haram*; and this friend of mine holds that beer is *halal*». So the woman said: «May I tell you about a fact that happened to me personally in connection with what you both are talking about? They both answered: «Yes!». So she said: «This baby, the one you see me carrying on my back, is a son that my own son had begotten from me, by raping me horrendously after he was inebriated by this beer about whose lawfulness and unlawfulness you are disputing. My going out of the house and putting my legs in motion is for nothing but for the purpose of asking the learned men ('ulama') if they have ever seen anybody inflicted with such a disgrace and a sinful act and whether it is lawful to kill (the baby) and what I am supposed to do».

«On hearing that, the (Hanafite) Faqih became amazed and what the woman said stupefied him. Therefore, he said: «I have nothing to say after this proof and nor will I live anymore in a country where beer is considered lawful».<sup>22</sup>

It is really interesting to find out that this same anecdote, with a slight variation, is still found in Sheikh Hussen's tracts regarding the same question, which is equally worrisome for the Oromo and the Sidama ethnic groups, when we come to the lawfulness of the honey-mead.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Rabi' al-Qulub*, p. 28.

<sup>23</sup> *Nuzhat al-Asrar*, p. 8.

خرج الشيخ الفاضل حسين رحمه الله الى بلد ابجار فلما سمع اهل ابجار خروج الشيخ اليهم اجتمع علماءهم وكان رئيسهم عيسى ابن مريم فخرجوا للقاء الشيخ الى موضع يقال له مقحت فسلموا على الشيخ ثم جلسوا ساعة فتحدثوا ثم قال الشيخ حسين للفقير عيسى ابن مريم ما تقول في النبيذ فقال الفقير انه حلال وانما الخمر حرام والخمر لا يكون الا من التمر والعنب فقال له الشيخ لم سمي الخمر خمرا قال الفقير لانه يخامر العقل فقال له الشيخ ان كان النبيذ يخامر العقل ما تقولون قال الفقير مع انه يخامر العقل يجوز ثم قال الشيخ رحمه الله اللهم ابعث لنا بمن يحكم بيننا فجلسوا ساعة ثم جاءت اليهم امرأة تحمل ابنا لها فقالت السلام عليكم فقالوا لها وعليك السلام ورحمة الله ثم قالت لهم ما تقولون في هذا الصبي ولدته من ابني قالوا كيف الخبر قالت انه شرب النبيذ وسكر ثم جاء الى البيت فلزمني فقلت يا بني أما تعرفني انا أمك فلانة قالت له زوجته تعال عندي وانا هنا فصرعني وأنا أصبح فصرت حاملا منه وهذا الولد الذي ترونه ما حكمكم فيه فقام الشيخ رحمه الله تعالى ما تقولون يا فقهاء بعد هذا البيان فقالت الفقهاء انا من الله وانا اليه راجعون فما يقال بعد هذا البيان ثم رجع الشيخ مع اصحابه الى بلده فما عاش الفقير بعد ذلك الا قليلا فلما سمع الشيخ بموته قال انكسر دن النبيذ اخبرني من اثق به من اهل العلم ان أحد من تلاميذ الفقير جادل ذلك اليوم في شان النبيذ مع الشيخ حسين فمات من سبعة ايام فمسخ الله تعالى وجهه وجه خنزير وله انياب كانياب الخنزير

«One day the virtuous Sheikh Hussen - may the compassion of God be upon him - set out and made for the country of Abgar.<sup>24</sup> When the people of Abgar heard that the Sheikh was coming to them, their savants ('ulama') whose head had the name 'Isa ibn Maryam held a meeting, and thence they started their trip toward the Sheikh to a place called Maqhat.<sup>25</sup> They greeted the Sheikh; and stopped for some time chatting. So Sheikh Hussen addressed himself to 'Isa ibn Maryam saying: «What is your opinion about honey-mead? The Faqih answered: "It is a lawful thing, whereas wine is unlawful. Wine is made from dates and grapes, that is why». The Sheikh retorted: «Why is wine called *khamr* (in Arabic)?». The Faqih answered: «Because it *Khamr* disturbs *yukhamir* the intellect». So the Sheikh ventured: «And if the honey-mead disturbs the intellect, what will you say to that? The Faqih answered: «Even if it disturbs the intellect,

<sup>24</sup> The vocalization of this name, ابجار is only hypothetical.

<sup>25</sup> The vocalization of *Maqhat*, of مقحت, is only hypothetical.



it would still be lawful».

«Upon hearing that the Sheikh - may the compassion of God be upon him! - implored:»Oh God! send us somebody who would arbitrate between us.«And, while still there for some time, there came a woman to their direction carrying a baby on her back and said: «Peace be upon you!». They answered: «Upon you as well be peace and the mercy of God!». And so saying she inquired: «Could you give me a piece of your mind and tell me about this boy to whom I gave birth from my own son?» They inquired: «Whatever happened?». She answered: «He had drunk honey-mead and, therefore, was tipsy. He came home and molested me. I said to him: ‘Don’t you know me? I am your mother called so and so’. And his own wife said to him: ‘Come to me, I am here for you. But he took me, while I was still shouting, and so made me pregnant. This is the boy whom you are looking at. What is your judgment now?» The Sheikh shouted - may the mercy of God be on him!-: «What would you ever say, oh Faqih, after this evidence?». The Faqih admitted: «We come from God and turn to him we shall! What can one ever possibly say after such a proof?».

«Then the Sheikh and his companions turned back to their own country. But the Faqih did not live longer, only for a short time, after what he had learned. And when the Sheikh heard about his death he said. «The jar of honey-mead has broken». One of the trustworthy learned men has informed me that one of Faqih's disciples had disputed with Sheikh Hussien that day about honey-mead. Therefore, he died within seven days; and the Almighty God transformed him into a swine with canine teeth similar to the ones of a wild boar».

The comparison between these two versions of the same tale would reflect some light on interesting details:

a) The opponent of the godly Sheikh Hussien is, in the first version, a Hanafite Faqih. So the Hanafite defends the lawfulness of honey-mead which is supposed to be a clumsy theory by the brotherhoods in Ethiopia which are considered to emanate from Muslim orthodoxy. From this one can easily trace the existence, beside Shafi’ite rite which is

predominant today, of a Hanafite nucleus, as we will be seeing further regarding the question of juridical rites.

b) The opponent of the godly Sheikh Hussen is, in the second version, a certain Faqih Isa ibn Maryam of Abgar. The people of Abgar seem to be a Semiticized population, at least judging by the name Maqhat, the country where this meeting took place. The theory of the lawfulness of honey-mead has, therefore, been attributed to people who are ethnically different from the inhabitants of Sheikh Hussen's region. One could rather doubt if the interesting name Faqih of Abgar, Isa ibn Maryam, is not real and simply indicates Semiticized Christian populations: a deformed past which had been adopted by recent Muslim tradition.

c) The position assumed by the two disputing parties take the question of alcohol and that of honey-mead, and its facade fits with the difference that represents the schism between the two schools of thoughts, the Shafi'ite and the Hanafite: because, as a matter of reality, the Shafi'ites adhere to the conviction that wine and all other alcoholic drinks are haram, while the Hanafites restrict the lawfulness of alcoholic drinks and allow other non-intoxicating drinks.

Nevertheless, the argument, which is the basic proof of Sheikh Hussen's, is that the intoxicating quiddity of both beer and honey-mead is the really acceptable argument even by the Hanafites themselves. This polemic, therefore, could have equally developed with the same argumentation even among two Hanafites, that is to say, during the past period when the Hanafites were predominant in Bali.

It is understood that the affirmation, in the second version, made by Faqih Isa ibn Maryam that honey-mead is lawful «even if it disturbs the intellect» has been attributed to his adversary Sheikh Hussen just for the sake of polemics.

## § 6 The Habit of Chewing Chat And Its Lawfulness

We link another question, which is no less important for the Muslims of Ethiopia, with that of the lawfulness of beer and honey-mead; the consumption of Chat.

I have already taken the opportunity to talk about the consumption of *Chat* in an earlier essay.<sup>26</sup> This shrub (*catha edulis* by Forskal and *celastrus edulis* by Schweinfurt) whose leaves are masticated has an exciting effect on the nervous system. The consumption of the same in Ethiopia has become one of the characteristics of Muslims. However the lawfulness of the consumption of *Chat* still remains a problem. Here we have the first story retained in Sheikh Hussen's tracts:<sup>27</sup>

وكان له في جرب جراء محب في الارض فقيه وكان يختلف اليه في بعض الاوقات وجاء عند ذلك الفقيه فقهاء من جرب جراء فقالوا بلغنا ان صاحبك قال ان المذر حرام وشاربه فاسق كيف لنا به حتى نقابله في الحجة فقال اتحسبونه في الحجة كسائر الناس ليس كذلك بل هو رجل عالم تقي ومع ذلك انه ولي من اولياء الله تعالى فانكم لا تفوقونه على حجته فاني اراكم ان تنتهوا عن معارضته فان كان ولا بد فهو يجيئ عندي في هذه الايام وانا منتظر مجيئه وبعد ذلك وصل الشيخ الى جرب جراء فلما سمعوا مجيئه فرحوا لانهم يرون الغلبة عليه بالحجة بانفسهم فتنادوا واجتمعوا عنده فقالوا يا ايها الشيخ بلغنا انك تحرم المذر وتبغض شاربه وتفسقهم كيف هذا والورق (هو الكات) مع كثرة عيبه لانرى انه حرام ولا تفسق آكله فان كان المذر حراما فالورق أولى ان يكون كذلك لان الورق اربعة من احواله احوال اهل النار فاول احواله انه يمنع صاحبه عن الاكل والامتناع عن الاكل من صفات اهل النار واهل النار اكلهم قليل ما داموا فيها والثاني انه يباغض الناس وبغض الناس من سوء الحال من احوال اهل النار والثالث انه يقل النوم وقلة النوم من صفات اهل النار لانهم لايجدون النوم ما داموا فيها والرابع يقل النكاح واهل النار لا يكون عندهم النكاح وما المذر فاربع من احواله احوال اهل الجنة فان المذر

<sup>26</sup> Cf. here above, pp. 297-299.

<sup>27</sup> *Rabi' al-Qulub*, p. 6.

لايمنع صاحبه عن الاكل والاكل من احوال اهل الجنة في الجنة والثاني يسمح الناس والسخاوة من صفات اهل الجنة في الجنة والثالث يطرب ويضحك وهو احوال اهل الجنة في الجنة واهل النار بخلاف ذلك من البكاء والحزن دائماً والرابع يقوى النكاح وهو مناحوال اهل الجنة في الجنة فهذه الاحوال كلها اي الاكل والشرب والطرب والضحك والنكاح احوال اهل الجنة في الجنة والورق خال عن هذه كلها قال لهم الشيخ رحمه الله اسمعوا ايها الفقهاء هل منا احد ينكر حال النبي صعلم كونه من اهل الجنة فقالوا لا فقال كيف حال النبي صعلم اكان كثير الضحك فقالوا لا فقال اكان كثير الاكل فقالوا لا فقال اكان كثير النكاح فقالوا لا ثم قال فقال اكل الورق اقرب أم حال شارب المذر اقرب الى حال النبي صعلم فتحيروا في امرهم وعجزوا عن جوابه فغلب عليهم بالحجة

He (Sheikh Hussen) had a very dear Faqih friend in a country called Garab-gara<sup>28</sup> to whom he paid frequent visits. Some learned men *fuqaha'* from Garab-gara' made a surprise visit to this Faqih and said to him: «We have heard that your friend (Sheikh Hussen) has claimed that beer is unlawful and drinking it is an impious thing. How can we possibly trace him and have a tit for tat argument with him?». He answered: «Are you probably convinced that his arguments are similar to the others? You err. He is a learned and pious man. Moreover, he is one of the Almighty God's holy men. You shall not be his peer if you argue. I wish you would desist from opposing him unless it is an absolute must. In that case, he is all for you because he is coming to me and I am expecting his arrival within a few days».

Then and as expected, Sheikh (Hussen) did arrive at Garab-gara'. When they heard about his arrival they became happy because they were certain that they would have the upper hand when the argument started. So they called one another and presented themselves in front of him and started by saying: «Oh Sheikh, we have heard that you declare beer unlawful, hate the one who drinks it and consider him a profligate. How can this possibly be? So what about the leaf (i.e., *Chat*), with all its shortcomings, you do not consider it haram and do not declare the

<sup>28</sup> I vocalize the place-name جراب جراب as Garab-Gara basing myself on a hypothesis.

consumer profligate? If beer is haram, the leaves (of *Chat*) should be equally so but pre-eminently. Because the leaves (of *Chat*) have four characteristics which are similar to the characteristics of those condemned to Hell. The first of their characteristics is they make one abstain from food; and abstention from food is one of the characteristics of the condemned to Hell, who only eat a little as long as they are in the fire. The second (characteristic of *Chat*) is that it keeps people apart from one another; and misanthropy is a vice and vices are the characteristics of the condemned. The third (characteristic of *Chat*) is it makes one suffer from insomnia; and insomnia is one of the characteristics of the condemned, who are not able to sleep as far as they are in the fire. The fourth (characteristic of *Chat*) is that it diminishes the sexual urge; and the condemned do not have that urge.

Regarding beer, four of its characteristics are the characteristics of the blessed ones who are in Paradise. Because beer does not interfere with appetite for food; and food is one of the characteristics enjoyed by the blessed in Paradise. The second (characteristic of beer) is that it renders one generous; and generosity is one of the characteristics of the blessed in Paradise. The third (characteristic of beer) is that it creates joy and ameliorates it with laughter; and this is one of the qualities of the blessed in Paradise, while the condemned ones are to the contrary because they never cease wailing and lamenting. And the fourth (characteristic of beer) is that it strengthens the libido, which is one of the characteristics of the blessed in Paradise. All these characteristics (of beer) are all in all, tantamount to saying that it is the beverage, of joy, laughter and sexual gratification, hence the characteristics of the blessed in Paradise; while the leaves (of *Chat*) harbour the contrary of all these characteristics».

Now Sheikh Hussen - may the compassion of God be with him!- started to answer them saying: «Listen to me, oh learned men! Is there anyone among you who denies that the conducts of the Prophet - may God's peace and compassion be upon him! - are of the blessed ones in Paradise?». They answered: «No!». So the Sheikh (Hussen) inquired: «How was the conduct of the Prophet? - may God's peace and compassion

be upon him! - «Did he laugh often?». They answered: «No!». So he (Sheikh Hussen) reiterated: «Maybe he (the Prophet) ate much, is that it?» They answered again: «No!». Then he (Sheikh Hussen) insisted: «Was he (the Prophet) probably talkative?». They again repeated: «No!». He (Sheikh Hussen) then interrogated: «Was he (the Prophet) then dedicated to too much sexual gratifications?». They answered: «No». So he (Sheikh Hussen) concluded: «Therefore, is the conduct of one who consumes the leaves (*Chat*) nearer to the conduct of the Prophet - may God's peace and compassion be upon him! - or to one who drinks beer?».

«So they (Sheikh Hussen's opponents) became baffled and did not have the desired upper hand. And thus the Sheikh bettered them».

As we have seen, Sheikh Hussen's argumentative prowess was, as a matter of fact, rather weak. He only defended here an ancient habit practiced by the Muslims of Ethiopia, which the Muslims themselves today would not be in the slightest disposed to renounce. It seems to be certain that *Chat*, just like any other euphoric drug, after its consumption for a long period of time, would end up debilitating the organism seriously, by damaging the nerve centres in the first place.

*Chat* seems to have had been introduced to Ethiopia from Arabia. This plant is very diffused in southern Ethiopia today, be it scrub or cultivated. Rather, its cultivation is held to be particularly rewarding because, the demand for this drug is huge in the markets of the Muslim countries of the south. I would like to repeat here, in connection with what I have said previously,<sup>29</sup> that among the Oromo, *Chat* (Gofa in Oromo) is used in pagan rites, because it is believed that it is the abode of a genie. Oromo chants cite, among others, the «King of all Trees» Gofa Firri Bulfatu' *Chat* because of which the people spend the whole night (awake).<sup>30</sup> So Muslim consumption could have been superimposed by preceding beliefs diffused among the pagan populations of Ethiopia.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. here above, pp. 297-299.

<sup>30</sup> *Folkliterature*, p. 101.

## § 7 The Relationship Between Arabia And The Muslim Bali: The Tanbih of Ash Shirazi

It is a known fact that the Muslim states of Ethiopia had constantly been backed, because of their political, economical and cultural relationships with Muslim countries, by the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. Regarding relationships between Arabia and the Sultanate of Bali, we can come across interesting documents in Sheikh Hussen's tracts. One of these refers to a certain tradition on the introduction, in the schools of Bali, of Tanbih ash-Shirazi, the famous classical treatise of Shafi'ite rite:<sup>31</sup>

حكى لي الفقيه اسماعيل بن ايقش والفقيه مبارك فقالوا جميعا لما رجع  
الفقيه موسى المقرئ من بلاد العرب فكان قد قرأ علم الفروع من التنبيه والمذهب  
من الشيخ الاوحد فريد دهره ووحيده عصره الفقيه اسماعيل الحضرمي وعن الشيخ  
الامام احمد بن موسى بن عجيل واجاز للفقيه موسى فرجع الى بلادنا وكان فقهاء  
بلادنا ما يقرؤن الا كتاب الضميري وما كانوا يعرفون التنبيه الا قليل منهم فجاء  
الفقيه موسى الى الشيخ العارفالرباني حسين بن ملكاي رضي الله عنه فلما جاء قام  
اليه واستقبله واكرمه الشيخ واما سائر العلماء فما عرفوه ولا يدرون من اين جاء فلما  
بات تلك الليلة جاء الفقيهان السيدان اسماعيل الحضرمي الشيخ احمد بن موسى بن  
عجيل الى الشيخ الاوحد المحقق قدوة المسلمين حسين بن ملكاي رضي الله عنه قال  
له يا شيخ حسين انا قد زرنا في بلادك زرعاً فهل نبت زرعنا أم لا فقال لهما  
الشيخ نعم أتعنيان الفقيه موسى قال لا له نعم فقال لهما سينبت ان شاء الله تعالى فقالا له  
الزم هذا الرجل عندك ثم أجمع فقهاء بلادك فليقرأوا عنه وليتعلموا عنده قال فارسل  
الشيخ الى جميع الفقهاء من بلاده فاجتمعوا عنده فامرهم ان يقرأوا عن الفقيه موسى  
قال فقرأ الفقهاء عن الفقيه موسى حتى نصرروا العلم اصولاً وفروعاً ببركة شيخنا  
وسيدنا ظهرت هذه العلوم اعاد الله علينا من بركاته

«I have been unanimously told by both Faqih Ismail ibn Ayash and Faqih Mubarak that Faqih Musa al-Muqri, had returned from Arabia,

<sup>31</sup> *Nuzhat al-Asrar*, p. 27.

where he had been studying norms of rites (*'Ilm Al Furu'*) according to Tanbih and the (Shafi'ite) rite from the only and the singular Sheikh of his century and the only one of his own time, Faqih Isma'il al-Hadhrami - as well as from Sheikh Imam Ahmed ibn Musa ibn 'Ujayl<sup>32</sup> who gave the Ijazah (permission for teaching) to Faqih Musa (the above-mentioned one). After which he (Faqih Musa) returned to our country.

«At that time the learned men of our country were not in the habit of reading (in their own schools) except ad-Dhamiri's book. A very few of them knew Tanbih. Faqih Musa came to the Sheikh and to the celebrated Hussen ibn Malakay - may God be satisfied with him! -. And when he (Faqih Musa) arrived, he (Sheikh Hussen) went to welcome and receive him honourably. Regarding the rest of the 'ulama', they neither recognized him, nor did they know where he (Faqih Musa) had come from.

«After he had spent the night, the two learned men, the two Sayyid, came: Isma'il al-Hadhrami and Sheikh Ahmed ibn Musa ibn 'Ujayl (in the dream) of the only and the recognized Sheikh, the model of Islam, Hussen ibn Malakay - may God be satisfied with him! - and said to him: «Oh Sheikh, we have planted a seed in your country. Has our seed sprouted or not? The Sheikh answered them: «Yes! Are you hinting at Faqih Musa? They said: «Yes!» So the Sheikh said: «It will sprout, if the Almighty God wills!». They added: «So keep this man (Faqih Masa) with you, and then collect the learned men of your country so that they may study and learn from him!».

He (the transmitter of this tradition) goes on to say: «Therefore, Sheikh Hussen gathered all learned men of his country who duly presented themselves before him. So he ordered them to learn from Faqih Musa». He (the transmitter of this tradition) goes on to say: «the learned men attended Faqih Musa's teachings till (then) they started diffusing (juridical) science, be it *usul* or *furu'*. And owing to the benediction of our

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<sup>32</sup> This same Imam Ahmed ibn 'Ujayl asks information (on p. 19 of *Rabi' al-Qulub*) about Sheikh Hussen from a certain Bali pilgrim on his way to Arabia.



Sheikh and our lord, these branches of science came to be spread - may God make us the beneficiaries of his blessings!».

This tradition is particularly interesting if seen from different points of view. Above all it proves the direct influence learned men from Hadhramut schools had on Muslim culture in Bali. The scholars of Ethiopia, like Faqih Musa in this case, went to study at schools in Arabia and then obtain the Ijazah, and returned with it to their native Ethiopia - in this case, to Bali - rich with new things learnt in Arab schools. This movement of Islamic cultural diffusion is strongly seconded by Muslim centres: Here, in Bali's case, by Sheikh Hussen's Muslim centre.

It is obvious that one of the main goals of this cultural propagation was and still is the diffusion of the Muslim rite; because the Shari'a, by also partially eliminating the tribal system, would also eliminate the principal local resistance in the region and hence in the Muslim state.

Therefore, Sheikh Hussen favoured Faqih Musa who suggested the introduction of teaching Tanbih, by Shirazi, in the schools of Bali, which is a Shafi'ite jurisprudence that would thus substitute «ad-Dhamiri's Book» that was studied in Bali.

## § 8 The Relationship Between Somalia And The Muslim

### Bali: Sheikh 'Ali Maye of Merca

The Arab colonization of the African coast of the Indian Ocean, which later became Italian Somaliland, jostled Muslim propagation and influenced the construction of other centres. I have already talked about Islam in Somalia in another work of mine.<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to find it documented in Sheikh Hussen's tracts as well that one of Somali centres, the one of Merca, was and still is in a close relationship with the Islam of Bali. Therefore, we have the contribution of a second cultural wave, the Somali one, which meets the other cultural wave that originated, as we have seen, from Arabia across Harar.

The tract *Nisbat ash-Sharif*<sup>34</sup> has retained the genealogy of a certain Sayyid Mahdi ibn Sayyid Faqih, who is probably the same author of the tract. Meanwhile we notice that the name Mahdi has been written according to the Somali (pronunciation) graphic ~~م~~ and that Faqih, according to Somali custom, has been used as if it were a proper name,

Now then, this Sayyid Mahdi is a descendant of Sheikh 'Uthman al-Marki al-Hashimi, who is, therefore, called al-Hashimi because of his discordance (just like all Somalis, after their own traditional genealogies) from 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, the brother of Caliph 'Ali, and is entitled al-Marki because he originates from Merca, in modern Somalia.

The genealogical tree of Sayyid Mahdi, which has been presented *In Extensio* in the cited tract, contains 20 generations commencing from Sayyid Mahdi and ending with Sheikh 'Uthman al-Marki. Here we are with the list: Sayyid Mahdi the son of Sayyid Faqih, the son of Sayyid Abdallah, the son of Sayyid Mahdi, the son of Sayyid Muhammed, the son of Sayyid Ahmed Maqam, the son of Sayyid

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<sup>33</sup> *Note Sul Movimento Musulmano In Somalia*, in Somalia, cit., Vol. I. pp. 177-210 and Vol. III, pp. 155-177.

<sup>34</sup> *Nisbat ash-Sharif* P. 69.

Muhammed the son of Sayyid Ahmed, the son of Yuhsin the son of Sayyid Sadiq, the son of Sayyid Ba Yuhsin, the son of Sayyid Abu Bakr, the son of Sayyid Khadhir, the son of Sayyid Abu Bakr, the son of Sayyid Muhammed, the son of Sayyid Hasan, the son of Sayyid 'Umar, the son of Sayyid Sheikh 'Uthman al-Marki.

So the person designated with the name Sheikh 'Uthman of Merca lived, according to this genealogy, twenty generations before the present one, that is to say, five centuries or so earlier. Therefore, Sheikh 'Uthman would have lived between the XV and the XIV centuries, earlier, hence, to the Oromo invasion of Bali. Let us note that, in that same epoch, the Ajuran Somali peoples in Somalia, after having driven the Oromo from the high and low Webi regions, had started to constitute a tiny Muslim state, which remained exemplary for its sound discipline, and with an immediate contact with the Arab colonies of the coast, amongst which Merca was one.

This contact between Merca and the Muslim centre of Bali could also, partially, explain the prevalence the Shafi'ite rite had acquired on the Hanafite one among the populations of the region (see further in § 9) Sheikh 'Uthman al-Marki seems to be somehow linked with the history of holy places such as the ones of Sheikh Hussen in Bali. Further research on oral traditions would give us more elements regarding the same.

The genealogy of Sayyid Mahdi presents the same Sheikh Hussen as the progenitor of Sheikh 'Uthman of Merca and the descendant, on his turn, of 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib. As a matter of fact Sheikh 'Uthman of Merca has, in the above-mentioned genealogy, Sayyid Hadir ibn Jamal ad-Din as a grandfather whose tomb - comments the genealogist - is at Basrah (probably not Basrah of 'Iraq, but Basrah the one on Webi in Somalia!); «he came [to Somalia] from a country named Bali». So we do have something here considered to be more than mere cultural relationships, about which the tradition retains a record, between Merca and Bali: the migration of Sayyid Hadir ibn Jamal ad-Din from Bali to Merca (twenty generations ago), which makes the pious Somali Sheikh 'Uthman al-Marki as well (who instead left Merca for Bali twenty generations ago) a

descendant of Sheikh Hussen of Bali.

The relationship between Merca and Bali thereafter continued and lasted up to this very day. The traces of this fact are found in an interesting socio-religious manuscript I personally brought away with me from Somalia some years ago: the autobiography of Sheikh 'Ali Maye of Merca.<sup>35</sup>

Sheikh 'Ali Maye too [p. 9 of my manuscript] had nominated 'Sheikh Hussen ibn Malakay' among his great teachers, by placing him in his list between the godly 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, the founder of Qadiriyyah, and Ahmed ibn Idris, the founder of *Ahmadiyyah*. Subsequently, while recounting his own mystical experience, 'Ali Maye refers to some visions experienced by him; and the following is only one of them (p. 10 of my manuscript):

ثم في الليلة الثالثة رايت ايضا سيدي عبد القادر الجيلاني والشيخ العارف الرباني الشيخ حسين بن ملكاي وزاد الحال وتابعت الاولياء السابقون واللاحقون والعارفون فاراهم في بعض الليالي اذ البيت<sup>36</sup> قد غص بهم وكان يسلمون على اهل البيت وبعض الليالي ترد عليهم زوجتي الصالحة ست بنت شيخ عبدوا واذا انتهت تقول لى سمعت السلام من البابوانا جالسة ارضع بنتى فريدة بنت الشيخ علي مي فرددته فاقول احسنت ثم بعد زمان امرني القطبان الغوثان سيدي عبد القادر الجيلاني وسيدي الشيخ حسين بن ملكاي مطالعة كتاب احياء علوم الدين وقالوا لى خصوصا ربع المهلكات وربع المنجيات وكان اخر عهدي الشيخ العارف قطب الاقطاب سيدي ومولاي الشيخ حسين بن ملكاي فاخبرني بان مرقده وسط الكفرة وأشار لى باشارات منامية فقال هذا اخر عهدي بك فلم اره بعد ذلك ثم لم اره رضى الله عنه الا ومعه خادما من خدامه ثم وصل الي اخي في الله حاج يوسف وكان ابن نحو سبعين سنة وكان صاحب العارف بالله سيدي عبد الواحد ثم سيدي العارف الشيخ حسين بن معلم مؤمن الجالي ثم صاحبي زمانا فسار في زمان صاحبي الى ارض الشيخ حسين رضى الله عنه ولبت فيها نحو سنة فقال لي رايت في خلوة

<sup>35</sup> Refer to my *Note Sul Movimento Musulmano In Somalia*, in Somalia, cit., Vol. I, p. 190. The autobiography in my manuscript has the title *Hathihi Tathkirat al-Labib, Fi Manaqib Afqar al-Khalq Ila Allah Ta'ala al-Hamid al-Majid Shaykhina As-Shaykh 'Ali ibn Muhammed*.

<sup>36</sup> C. A. Nalino has suggested to me to read it as البيت and not a البيت Cf. here further on p. 350

الشيخ رجلين فسلمت عليهما فردا علي السلام فاستخبراني فقالا لي من اين دخلت لنا فقلت لهما من شط البحر فقالا لي من اي بلدة فقلت لهما من بلدة المركة فقالا اتعرف الشيخ علي بن مي فقلت لهما نعم فقلت ومن اين عرفتهما فقالا لي كنا في الخلوة فدخل علينا ويده بيد سيدنا القطب الغوث الاستاذ ابراهيم بن صالح الرشيد فقلنا للسيد ابراهيم بن صالح الرشيد من هذا الذي يده في يدك فقال لنا الشيخ علي بن مي في مركة فقالا لي الحمد لله الذي ارانا من راه رضى الله عنهما ثم تبركاني بك فرحا بلقائي ثم دخلت البلد فاذا انا بمناد فالتفت اليه فاذا رجل جالس على كرسي ومعه مسبحة نحو الف حبة فسرت اليه فسلمت عليه فرد علي السلام فقال لي من اين فقلت من الشط فقال من اي بلدة فقلت من مركة فقال اتعرف الشيخ علي بن مي فقلت نعم ثم قال الحمد لله الذي ارانا من راه هل اكلت معه يوما فقلت نعم فتبركاني بك فقلت له من انت فقال من السادات من آل بيت النبي صعلم فقال ان رجعتك الله اليه ومن عليك بلقائه فبلغ سلامي فقل له قم لدين الله ولا تخف احدا قال فتعجبت لذلك فقال قلت له من عين عرفته فقال عرفنا بتعريف الله ثم رايت ايضا رجلا من السادات جالسا على كرسي ومعه مسبحة فاستخبرني عن حالك وقال لي مثل مقالة الاول قل له قم لدين الله ولا تخف في الله لومة لائم

«Then and during the third night I happened to see my master 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani as well as the celebrated and learned Sheikh Hussen ibn Malakay; the mystical state in me was rekindled and made me follow the ancient ones who followed the godly men as well as the mystical ones whom I kept seeing for some nights while a coarse tunic was suffocating them;<sup>37</sup> they greeted the (my) family. Some nights my wife Sitti the daughter of Sheikh 'Abdiyo used to answer them. Upon waking up, she said to me: «I heard somebody greeting from the door while I was breast-feeding my daughter Faridah bint Sheikh 'Ali Maye. And so I answered the greeting saying: Thank you».

«Then, after a while, the two mystical columns and (the Helpers)<sup>38</sup> Sayyid 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani and my master Sheikh Hussen ibn Malakay ordered me to peruse the book *Ihya' ad-Din* and, they said to

<sup>37</sup> I hereby confirm the correction لبت instead of ليت. CF. note 36 on p. 348.

<sup>38</sup> Re the value of *Gawt* in *Sufi* hierarchy, see, for example, the article by Macdonald in *Encyclopedie De Islam* s.v.

me, especially the *quarto* of things that bring up nemesis and the *quarto* of things that save. That was my last relationship with the learned Sheikh, the column among the columns of Mysticism, my master and refuge Sheikh Hussen ibn Malakay. He has indicated to me in my dream by saying: This is my abode among the infidels» and said «this is my last relationship with you». I never saw him again.

«I never saw him-may God be satisfied with him except when he was accompanied by a servant. Then he (Sheikh Hussen) appeared to my brother in God, Hajj Yusuf who was then about 70 years old. He was the friend of the God-gifted and my master 'Abd al-Wahid; and then to my God-gifted master Sheikh Hasan ibn Mu'allim Mumin of the Jajela tribe; then he befriended me for a certain period of time. Thereafter, while our friendship was still well cemented, he left for the land of Sheikh Hussen Malakay - may God be satisfied with him! - and remained there for about one year.

He said to me: 'I saw two men in the spiritual retreat of the Sheikh and paid them respect. They did likewise and interrogated me so saying: Where have you come to us from? I answered: from beside the sea. Then they asked me: From which town? I answered: from the town called Merca. They asked me: Do you happen to know Sheikh 'Ali ibn Maye? I answered: Yes! And they added: How do you come to know him? So they started to tell me all: We were in a certain spiritual retreat when he appeared to us hand in hand with our master, the pillar of mysticism and the Helper, Master Ibrahim ibn Salih ar-Rashid. So we asked Sayyid Ibrahim ibn Salih ar-Rashid: Who is the one who has his hand in yours? He answered us: He is Sheikh 'Ali Maye of Merca. And both concluded saying: Praised be God who made us see who had seen him - may God be satisfied with them both! Then they started to congratulate me and expressed their immense joy for having met me.

Then after I entered the town where I heard a voice call me; I turned my face to the direction of that cry only to see a man seated in a chair with a rosary of about one thousand beads in hand. I made for him and greeted him. He answered the greeting and wanted to know from

where I had come. I answered him: From the seaside. He repeated: From which town? I obliged: From Merca. He inquired: Do you happen to know Sheikh 'Ali ibn Maye? I answered: Yes! He exclaimed:- Praised be God who Has shown me who had seen him! Have you ever eaten with him? I confirmed: Yes! And he gave me the honour of meeting you. Then I added: But who are you? He answered: I am a Sherif, the descendant of the Family of the Prophet. - May God's Blessings and Peace be upon Him! - And added: Should God have you return to him ('Ali Maye) and concedes you the benefit of seeing him again, please remember me to him! And tell him to get up and fight for the religion of God and not to be ever angst-stricken! And he (al-Hajj Yusuf) continued, I remained dumbfounded and had to ask: How come you know him? He answered: We know him through the knowledge of God.

Then I saw a certain other Sherif seated in a chair with a rosary in hand who asked me the same things asked by the first one: Tell him to fight for the religion of God and never to be afraid of any reproach from anybody!.

This story, therefore, comprises:

- a) The first apparition of the godly Sheikh Hussen in company of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani during a mystical exercise conducted by Sheikh 'Ali Maye of Merca.
- b) The second apparition of the same godly men advised 'Ali Maye of Merca to peruse the book *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* by al-Ghazali.
- c) A certain al-Hajj Yusuf, the friend of Sheikh 'Ali Maye during his trip from Merca to the region of Bali.

The first of these episodes proves, not only the existence of bonds between Bali and Merca, but also the veneration had in Merca for Sheikh Hussen who has been put on a par with al-Jilani, who is one of the most popular God-fearing men in Islam.

The second episode does not harbour a less interesting theme

which, because of its allusions to al-Ghazali, gives us interesting data of its knowledge of the cultural degree of these mystical schools of East Africa.

The two *quarters* cited (*Rub' al-Muhlikat*, and *Rub' al-Munjiyat*) form the second part of *Ihya'* which, as is known, is divided into 4 *rub's* of ten books each.

The last story, which has been introduced to confirm, reciprocally, the bonds between Merca and Bali through inquiries conducted in Bali among the pilgrims of Merca regarding 'Ali Maye, also proves personal relationships between the Muslim centre of Sheikh Hussen of Bali and Merca of Somalia which existed even during very recent times.

It is worthwhile to specify that Sheikh 'Ali ibn Maye (or according to Somali usage: 'Ali Maye) lived during the second half of the XIX century and died after the Italian occupation of Somalia. Sheikh 'Ali Maye was one of the founders of the Ahmadiyyah Brotherhood in Somalia; and it is apt to note while we are still coherent with the subject that the components of Wau extraction, the guardians of Sheikh Hussen's tomb in Bali adhere to the Ahmadiyyah Brotherhood up to this very day, as we will see in the following paragraph regarding the rest. Rather, tentative for linking the Ahmadiyya's Zawaya which depend on Sheikh Hussen and the ones of Somalia which depend on Sheikh 'Ali Maye were not in a short supply. These tentative however have ended in a fiasco hitherto for reasons of local character.<sup>39</sup>

These relationships between the followers of Sheikh Hussen of Bali and the Somalis of Merca, therefore, could have introduced Islamic cultural elements to keep pace with the concourse of Arab cultural waves. The Islam of other regions of southern and western Ethiopia, according to some traditions, would have been in contact with cultural centres of the coast of the Indian Ocean - which used to be Italian Somaliland. So the

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<sup>39</sup> Refer to my cited *Note Sul Movimento Musulmano In Somalia*, in Somalia, cit., Vol. I, p. 190.



reigning Gomma Dynasty, the Oromo mini-state on the north-west of Jimma, claimed the origin of a certain Sheikh who had come there from Mogadishu.<sup>40</sup> And it is not improbable that, regarding these contacts too, the crossing bridge was the veneration had for Sheikh Hussen of Bali.

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<sup>40</sup> *Etiopia Occidentale*, I, p. 151. I had interpreted the hint in Mogadishu within Gomma's tradition as if it were a confusion with Sheikh Hussen's pilgrimage. But now I hold that nothing would veto the consideration that Sheikh Hussan's contacts with Mogadishu have been verified after all.

## § 9      **The Juridical Muslim Schools of Bali**

Al-'Umari and al-Maqrizi unanimously confirm that the Muslims of Bali adhere to Hanafi rite;<sup>41</sup> and al-Qalqashandi also holds the same conviction. The Hanafi rite had to last for a long time in Bali, because a dispute flared up between the Shafi'ites and the Hanafites about the traditions regarding the life of Sheikh Hussen (see the preceding §5).

The Muslims of Bali today, according to pieces of information I collected, are all Shafi'ites. The propagation for the Shafi'ite rite seems to have been launched by the Muslim state of Ifât, which had a Shafi'ite majority during the XIV century, while during the XV century, there started to exist a strong Hanafite minority. Then the Shafi'ites enjoyed a definite upper hand, but not without polemics about which, at least one document in Harari Arabic literature, remains at hand.<sup>42</sup>

The Shafi'ite propagation in Bali was mainly seconded by the teachings of Sheikh Hussen, whose pious tradition had flared up - as we have seen - the Dhafi'i controversialist at loggerheads with the Hanafites. So we can understand, given the particular position of Bali, that the passage of Sheikh Hussen's religious heads to the Shafi'ite rite had paved the way for the diffusion of that rite in all the regions of Bali.

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<sup>41</sup> *Kitab al-Ilmam*, ed. by G. Zaydan, p. 8 مملكة بالى وأهلها حنفية

<sup>42</sup> Cf. here above, p. 318.

## § 10      **Bali During The XV Century And The Abyssinian Military Colonization**

The Muslim state of Bali had already gone through serious internal crises during the XIII century, just as all mini-states of southern Ethiopia frequently had. As a matter of fact, a passage from al-'Umari's,<sup>43</sup> reproduced - with some variations - by al-Qalqashandi<sup>44</sup> narrates about a certain notable of Bali «therefore, not belonging to the royal family, who was insinuated in favour of the Amhara sovereign [the Abyssinian Negus] who had the investiture of the Kingdom of Bali where he, this notable of Bali, rendered himself independent». Here too the Abyssinian Negus found himself in a position of availing himself of disagreements that arose amongst the Muslims and seized the opportunity of asserting his own influence in the country.

This influence, about which no other known document but Arab or Ethiopian makes mention of in the XIV century, appears to be already triumphant after the first period of great wars between the Muslims and the Negus, because the Ethiopian chronicle of Zare'a Ya'qob's, who reigned from 1434 up to 1468, alludes to Bali as if it were a protectorate of the Negus' State. In fact Zare'a Ya'qob is worried<sup>45</sup> about the threat manifested by Hadiya's Garad against Medra Dawaro Wa-Bali 'the territories of Dawaro and Bali' (the translation of Perruchon *Les Royaumes De Dawaro Et De Bali* is not correct). Evidently the Negus during the XIV century were able to subjugate the Muslim mini-state of Bali.

The chronicle of Ba'eda Maryam, the son and the successor of Zare'a Ya'qob (1468-1478), talks clearly about Bali as part of the

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<sup>43</sup> Al-'Umari, ed. cit., p. 19

<sup>44</sup> Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha* 332

<sup>45</sup> *Chronique De Zar'a Ya'eqob Et De Ba'eda Maryam*, ed. by Perruchon, pp. 17 and 19.

Abyssinian state. There are other chiefs before Garad Jan-Zeg (therefore, an Abyssinian or at least a Christian) and the Gabra Iyasus, who is only Garad before and then assumes the title of *Behtwadam*. So we are not living during a full hierarchy, feudal Abyssinia.

However, what is more important to us is, the Chronicle of Ba'eda Maryam which contains some hints about the presence of Shewa in Bali, that is, the Abyssinian Military colonies.<sup>46</sup> This body of troops which were sent to colonize Bali would rather be involved in a movement of rebellion which comes to be repressed by Baeda Maryam. This Chronicle has also retained the names of two bodies of troops stationed in Bali; the Tanach and the Shewa Hadari.<sup>47</sup> Thus, beside the population of Sidama, the Abyssinian groups planted themselves in Bali with the same methods of Negus' military colonization, which we have seen in action up to our very date.

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<sup>46</sup> *Chronique De Z.Y. Et De Baeda Maryam*, cit., pp. 140,157.

<sup>47</sup> *Chronique*, cit., p. 158.

## § 11     **Bali And The Muslim Invasion of The XVI Century.**

When Bali reappeared in local histories, that is to say during Negus Na'od's reign (1494-1508) and, subsequently, when the great Muslim invasion led by the Left-handed Ahmed ibn Ibrahim occurred, we find the chiefs of the country having Abyssinian Christian names: Wanag Jan, Takle Haymanot etc. This fact however cannot lead us into assuming that the population had effectively assimilated; on one hand because it is only natural that the Muslim invasion was meant to oppose the garrisons and the Abyssinian colonies in that region, which, therefore, has been cited in documents; on the other hand, as I have already touched upon in another place,<sup>48</sup> the defections from the Christian camp to the Muslim one and vice versa are found to be frequent: an evident sign of a non-stable political situation.

The episode related to us by *Futuh al-Habashah* which took place during Na'od's reign is characteristic, as has been observed by Rene Basset.<sup>49</sup> A prominent person belonging to Christian Abyssinia named Wanag Jan rebels against Negus Na'od and takes refuge in the camp of Sultan Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din, who was then resident at Dakar near Harar, and converts to Islam. So Sultan Muhammed ibn Azhar ad-Din puts the command of an expedition against Bali in the hands of this renegade. But the Christian troops garrisoned in Bali defeat this renegade, take him prisoner and take him to Negus Na'od. The Negus in his turn, not only saves the life of the renegade, Wanag Jan, but rather, owing to his return to the Christian religion, nominates him as the Abyssinian governor of Bali. After the elapse of some time, Wanag Jan organizes a bloody ambush against the commanders of the Christian troops under his own charge, returns to Islam only to be beaten by the soldiers of the Negus

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. above, pp. 306-308.

<sup>49</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah*, cit., (transl.), p. 165, note 1.

once more. This very Wanag *Jan*, who had changed his religion a good four times, later dies on the bank of the river Webi and, says the Muslim chronicler, «his tomb is still recognized, frequented and has become a niche for obtaining blessings».<sup>50</sup>

During the great invasion of Ahmed ibn Ibrahim, Bali was conquered by the Muslims led by Wazir 'Addole with a battle fought near Zellah<sup>51</sup> in the month of *Dhu al-Hijjah* in the year 938 *Hegira* which corresponds to the period of 5<sup>th</sup> July - 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1532.<sup>52</sup> And starting from that date and up to Menilek II's reign, for more than three and a half centuries, one can say that the Abyssinian Christians never dominated Bali. This long interval has a great deal of importance when we consider the ethnical history of this country, since it explains the reasons for a total assimilation aimed at by the Negus' military colonies with the peoples of Sidamo and Oromo. This Abyssinian colonization of Bali, as we have seen, did not last even for one century from the middle of the XV century to 1532. A little while after the start of the Oromo invasion which brought up, beside ancient Sidama inhabitants and Abyssinian military colonies entered during the XV-XVI centuries, a new and highly important constitutive element of the populations of Bali which came into being.

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<sup>50</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* (text), p. 94 وقبره معروف مشهور يتبرك به (transl.), p. 167

<sup>51</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* (text), p. 287 (transl.), p. 383.

<sup>52</sup> *Futuh al-Habashah* (text), p. 295 (transl.), p. 390

## § 12    **Bali And The Oromo Invasion**

The peoples of Sidamo in the then Muslim kingdom of Bali were the first to be attacked by the Oromo during the start of their invasion of the Ethiopian highland. All sources agree on this point. The Ethiopian History of The Oromo says clearly.«The Oromo came out from the west after having crossed the river of their country which is called Galana, on the border of Bali, during the epoch of Negus Wanag Saggad<sup>53</sup>».

P. Emanuele D'Almeida writes a passage of particular interest in his *Historia De Ethiopia A Alta*: «*Estas terras pois que iazem entre Baly e o mar [the Indian Ocean], cuja costa os navegantes chamao a deserta, he o proprio ninho e patria dos Oromos. Daqui sayo esta praga e acoite de Deus a primeira vez no tempo do emperador David, que pelo nome do batismo se chamava primeiro Lebena Danguil [Lebna Dengal] e depois se chamou tambem Onag Cagued [Wanag Saggad] etc. e entrarao logo pelo reino Baly com o qual confinavao ou vizinhavao muito e tambem entrarao pelo reino de Adel, a que nos chamamos de Zaila, que com Baly confina*».<sup>54</sup> This passage written by D'Almeida is, therefore, important because it confirms the traditional local history regarding the original Oromo centre in modern southern Somalia about which I will be talking soon.

Another indirect confirmation of the Oromo attack on the Sidamo ethnic group of Bali is found in the Ethiopian chronicle of Negus Glawdewos (Glawdios). This Negus had established himself in Dawaro in 1545, where he remained for about three years raging war against the Hadiya and the Oromo.<sup>55</sup> Then Dawaro comprised the region to the north

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<sup>53</sup> Edited by Guidi, (text) p. 223, (transl.) p. 195. See also (text), p. 225; (transl.), p. 198: «So the one who had been circumcised when he waged war against Bail was Melbah». For a wonder, Melbah has been mentioned in the same passage as the initial Oromo government during the period of the invasion.

<sup>54</sup> *Rerum Aethiopicarum*, V, p. 474

<sup>55</sup> *Chronique De Glawdewos*, edited by Conzelman, Paris 1895 (text), p. 33 (trans) p. 141

of Webi which is on the immediate border of Bali.<sup>56</sup> Glawdewos' exploit was, therefore, directed at establishing a solid barrier against the Bali invading Oromo in the south of Shewa.

A need would arise here to remember what I have said elsewhere<sup>57</sup>: The Oromo invasion of Bali was preceded (or probably was followed)<sup>58</sup> by another venture, which - as has been attested by the Ethiopian History of The Oromo - was first tentative of the Oromo invasion of the highland during the XVI century. A column of Borana Oromo left the country of the Oromo 'across Kuera' and, having met the Abyssinians led by a certain Fasil, defeated them and killed Fasil himself; meanwhile the ecclesiastical author of History of The Oromo prognosticates saying: «I am afraid of those who have killed Fasil because they have tasted Christian blood».

I have proved elsewhere that when we say 'across Kuera' we mean the country of the Koyra (or Badditu) which is the region on the south-west of the Regina Margherita Lake. Now I add that this identification has also been confirmed by some passages of magical texts in which, beside other great lakes of Ethiopia, mention has been made of Bahra Kira (or better Bahra Kuera) 'Lake Kuera', that is, Regina Margherita.<sup>59</sup> Therefore; the Sidamo people were after all attacked by the Oromo be it through the southern region of their territory by the column which had passed through Galana (Ganale Doria) or through the western regions by the column that had followed the Koyra route, that is, the corridor between Regina Margherita and the mountains that demarcate the watershed of the Indian Ocean.

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. here above, p. 289.

<sup>57</sup> *Etiopia Occidentale*, II, p. 171.

<sup>58</sup> The passage of *History of The Oromo* does not seem to be very clear in the chronological point of view, and, therefore, I am less affirmative here more than I was when I cited the same chapter in *Etiopia Occidentale*.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, S. Grebaut's, *Catalogue Des Manuscrits Ethiopiens De La Bibliothque Ambrosienne*, in *Revue De L'orient Chretien*, IX 1933-1934, pp. 16, 18.



### § 13     Sidamo And Oromo Ethnic Groups In Bali

The first enemies of the Oromo on the highland, therefore, were the Sidamo people. Rather, the Sidamo people had been for a long period of time, maybe for centuries, the nearest enemies of the Oromo and it was they who played the role of a buffer nation before one reached the northern territory.

One can derive a down-to-earth fact from these historical details that for the Oromo, the foreigners, owing to antonomasia, were the Sidamo ethnic groups. And therefore, the word Sidama in Oromo language (an adapted form of the name Sidamo), means ‘an alien, and not Oromo’ in general. It is not unlike Somali dialects, which had the southern Oromo people as their neighbours for centuries, and hence the ethnic name of the Oromo *Gallo* means ‘non-Muslim’.

This generic value of the name Sidama has been retained in the spoken Oromo up to this very day within the territories of the Ethiopian highland which were invaded and occupied by the Oromo after the XVI century.

That is why the European travellers of the XIX century (Antoine D’Abbadie, to start with) who, having heard the name Sidama pronounced by the Oromo to designate the non-Oromo populations of the south-west, adopted the name Sidama in their terminology to designate not only the single population anymore, to which this name was expected to fit properly, but to refer to all ethnic (and linguistic) groups which extended from Sidamo, on the east, and reached the Lake Regions as far as Kaffa to the borders of the highland toward Sudan, on the west.

Another evidence, supplied by the toponymy, of the ancient neighbourhood of the Oromo and the Sidamo groups in the region of Bali is the name of the river which is designated as *Uebi Shebelli* on our maps. This same river is known by the Ogaden Somali people as Webi Sidamo. But now this name, according to the Somali usage, indicates the origin of the river (a vale further down, across the region of the Hawiyya

Guggundabe and Shidla, this river is called Webi Shabella the 'Webi of Shabella' because it originates from the region of Shabella, the Guggundabe upstream). With the Somali name Sidamo one cannot help imagine that it only alludes to the region of water courses, which among other things is not even, just to be exact, in Sidamo territory, but only and exactly within the modern day border between Sidamo and Bali. Therefore, the name Webi Sidamo cannot refer to the current position of populations; but rather- in my own opinion - to the epoch anterior to the XVI century, when the Sidamo ethnic group was still in Bali and therefore, occupied both banks of the Webi starting from its source on their border, upstream, with the Somalis.

Therefore, we have, after the Oromo invasion of the XVI century, an ethnical status which could be summed up as follows: the Sidamo of Regina Margherita Lake on the upper curve of Ganale Doria (southern boundary) and from there to the right bank of Ganale Doria as far as the mountain slopes which close in the basin on the south of Regina Margherita Lake, where the Oromo lived, and who had their border extended along the Juba valley as far as the Indian Ocean. On the north of Sidamo, that is to say, on the left bank of the Webi, between Webi and Hawash, there we find the peoples of the mini-state of Dawaro. Apart from native populations, we also find the Abyssinian military colonies in the territory of Sidamo.

## **§ 14      The Situation of The Sidamo Ethnic Groups After The Invasion of The Oromo**

Little or nothing is known about the events where the Sidamo people, after having been defeated by the Oromo, had confine to abandon the northern valley of Webi and reduced themselves within the nowadays centres.

A certain Oromo tradition, about which I have touched upon elsewhere,<sup>60</sup> records that the Oromo had annihilated the Muslim Kingdom of Bali «in the realm of Sheikh Hussen». Nevertheless we ought not to take this tradition too literally, which could only allude to the importance, even prior to the Oromo invasion, of the religious centre of Sheikh Hussen's which the centre enjoyed. At any rate, there remains the fact that the pagan Oromo, not only destroyed Sheikh Hussen but fairly assimilated his rites with their own ceremonies, as I have elaborated in another work of mine.<sup>61</sup>

One other detail, of which Oromo historical tradition has retained a record, is that the region within the left bank of Webi (i.e. Dawaro) was invaded only after the region of the right bank (Bali) had already been conquered. We have already seen how the Ethiopian History of The Oromo and the chronicle of Negus Glawdios had asserted the same order of Oromo conquests (see above, § 12);

The modern day geographical position of Sidamo and Oromo gives another evidence regarding the vicissitudes of wars waged between these two populations. We have seen above how a Oromo column fought its way toward the highland after having traversed «the Koyra route» along the corridor on the east of Regina Margherita Lake. But today that area lies on the mountainous side to the south of the same Koyra or

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<sup>60</sup> *Le Popolazioni Del Bacino Superiore Del Uabi*, in Somalia, cit., Vol. II, p. 127.

<sup>61</sup> *Le Popolazioni Del Bacino Superiore Del Uabi*, in Somalia, cit., Vol. II p. 134.

Badditu stocks (who are the Omo Sidamo population) and, on the northern side of the Lake along the watershed of Webi, by Sidamo. Thus, the Borana Oromo, who have remained up to this very day within their own ancient centre in the valleys of Ganale Doria and Daua Parma (Dawa), have been separated from the Oromo who established themselves on the Ethiopian highland by a vast and deep area kept by the populations of Sidama.

We therefore have to assume that, as a result of events still unknown to us, the various groups of Sidamo have succeeded in taking back «the Koyra route» from the Oromo: so much so that - on the other hand - it can be explained when one imagines the hunted populations of Bali who were coerced to take refuge on a mountainous area between Webi and Regina Margherita Lake, to be in a position, without much difficulty, of blocking the underlying valleys as soon as the impact of the first invasion had faded.

This action ventured by the Sidama, which at first sight could appear to be purely local, has therefore, had a noteworthy consequence on the ethnical physiognomy of Ethiopia because it has kept the territorial contiguity of the Sidama peoples' stock united beginning from Ganale Doria as far as the White Nile Basin.

Naturally, beside these which are considered to be great results of wars fought between the Oromo and the Sidamo, it was the guerrilla warfare between these two people that really started earlier than the XVI century invasion, which has kept on going and has perpetuated up to these very days. As a matter of fact the Sidamo are, according to Oromo customary rite, Dina, that is tantamount to saying that they are on whom, in case of a homicide, one must apply the '*lex talionis*' without any possibility of settlement through the payment of blood money.

## § 15 Sheikh Hussen And Guerrilla Warfare Amongst The Peoples of Bali

In addition to this warfare between these two ethnic groups, raids and vendettas between one given tribe and the other of the same Sidamo stock or the same Oromo one were rife and thriving. The cited tracts of Sheikh Hussen also make mention of wars waged among various inhabitants of Bali. Here is the first document:<sup>62</sup>

قال لما تخاصم اهل اخمس مع شيخنا وسيدنا جليل القدر احمد ابن الشيخ العارف حسين بن ملكاي رضي الله عنه في شان الجبل وتقاتلوا ارسل الشيخ الى جميع اصحابه واصحاب ابيه فارسل الى صوفي عمر والى الشيخ ابون سفيان والى اكابر رؤسه واما الصوفي عمر جمع سبعين رجلا من اصحابه معهم السيوف والاسلحة واما الشيخ ابون تاجر فلم يات قال لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق قال فلما تهيأ الشيخ للقتال مع من حضر من اصحابه ان ارسل الى اهل اخمس والى اهل عز ليعينهم على القتال فاجابهم الى ذلك قبيلة فاباهم اكثر اهل العز قال فلما رأى الشيخ ذلك الامر ارتحل من العز الى الورجي فاقام بها اياما قاعدا فلما راوا ذلك اجتمع اهل العز مع اخمس وحرقوا ديار الشيخ جميعا فلما رأى الشيخ انهم احرقوا دياره دعى عليهم وقال اللهم اخذل اهل العز وسلط عليهم اعدائهم الى عشر سنين وما لبثوا الا اياما قليلة حتى تقاتل العز مع الورجي فنصر الله اهل الورجي بدعاء الشيخ الى عشر سنين كما قال الشيخ

«He said [the story-teller]: When the people of Akhmas fell out with our Sheikh and Sayyid, the most revered and dignified, Ahmed the son of the knowledgeable Sheikh Hussen ibn Malakay-may God be satisfied with him! - regarding the mountain and fought among themselves, Sheikh Hussen sent word to all his followers and the followers of his father: he sent word to Sufi 'Omar and to Sheikh Abun Sufyan and to his uppermost representatives. So Sufi 'Omar assembled

<sup>62</sup> *Rabi' al-Qulub* p. 34.

seventy men from among his own disciples, equipped with swords and spears. But Sheikh Abun was absent and never showed up, saying: No obedience to any creature, if this obedience implies disobedience of the Creator!

«He said [the story-teller]: And when the Sheikh prepared himself and prepared his followers who had been with him to fight, he started by sending messages to the people of Akhmas and to those of 'Izz so that they might help him in the war. One single tribe answered them favourably, but the majority of the 'Izz tribe refused. He [the story-teller] went on saying: And when the Sheikh kept himself abreast with this fact, he moved from 'Izz and made for Wargay and sojourned there for a few inactive days.

«When they saw this, the 'Izz tribe joined hands with the Akhmas and burnt all the houses owned by the Sheikh to the ground. And when the Sheikh saw the arson inflicted upon his houses, he cursed them saying: Oh God, leave the people of 'Izz in the lurch and have their enemies exert their authorities on them for ten years! Not even a few days passed before the 'Izz found themselves embroiled in a fight against the Wargay; and God thrust victory on the Wargay for ten years in answer to the beseechment of the Sheikh, just as the Sheikh had solemnly implored».

The story of the penitence made by Sheikh Abun, who was reluctant to aid Sheikh Hussen's son in the war - as we have seen above - follows. Sheikh Abun admits vassalage fully and enjoys a pardon. Then, the story goes on as follows:<sup>63</sup>

ان الشيخ غزى الى اهل اخمس ليلا ونهارا حتى باداهم ثم اجتمع اهل العز مع الاخمس وجاؤا الى الشيخ وافدين وتركوا ما كانوا يعملون من الخصومة وتابوا ودخلو في حكم الشيخ وبنلوا الجبل الذى منعه ثم طلبوا من الشيخ الصلح والدعاء قال وصالحهم الشيخ وعفى عنهم ودعا لهم ثم قالوا له أنت الذى دعوت الله علينا لاهل ورجى ولهذا غلبونا من قلة عددهم بسبب دعائك فاليوم جنناك تائبين مستغفرين فادع لنا قال فدعا لهم الشيخ وعفى لهم ثم قال لهم اهل العز مني وانا منهم

<sup>63</sup> *Rabi' al-Qulub*, p. 37.

ثم قال لهم لا يغلبكم بعد اليوم ابدًا ان شاء الله تعالى

«The Sheikh [Ahmed b. Sheikh Hussen] made raids upon the Akhmas day in and day out till he decimated them. So the people of 'Izz held a meeting with the people of Akhmas after which they sent their delegates to the Sheikh as emissaries. They abandoned their hostilities, repented and put themselves under the jurisdiction of the Sheikh. They offered him the mountain which they had denied him (entry) earlier. Then they asked of the Sheikh peace and benediction. He [the story-teller] went on saying: The Sheikh befriended them, forgave them and benedicted them. Now they said to him: «You are the one who had invoked God against us in favour of the Wargay and that is why they have won, despite their limited number, because of your invocation. That is why we are here now penitently and to ask you forgiveness. So, pray benedict us!». Then he [the story-teller] continued: So the Sheikh benedicted and pardoned them; and added saying: «The people of 'Izz are mine and I am theirs». Then added: «Your foes shall not defeat you, as from today, and never again, if the Almighty God so will».

This story could give ground to various observations of an interesting nature. Above all one can notice how Sheikh Ahmed, the son and the successor of the godly Sheikh Hussen b. Malakay, reacts vis-à-vis the Bali tribe as an equal and as a political head. Therefore, we are in front of a conflict which is going on among the tribes on one hand, who are the traditional, political and social unity, and the other ones who are strong with this new organism that has been created around Sheikh Hussen's Zawiya which is above and free from any bonds of aristocracy deriving from rivalries among the tribes themselves. This is not at all a rare situation in East Africa, where Islam has represented, in countries which have a social order based on a patrician style, a tendency toward a political organization with a territorial character. Yet, just as happened in other places as well, Sheikh Hussen's Zawiya here, surrounded by tribes on each and every side, which was able to notch but not disunite, has itself become a unit within inter-patrician game, in the sense that, not unlike

ethnic tribes, not based on agnation but on common mystical «chain» of the godly founder of Zawiya - allies itself with one or the other tribe; and contends territories to single ethnic groups and becomes active in raids etc. So we are in a phase analogous to the one of southern Somalia where single Zawayahs adhered to by Muslim brotherhoods and had, as a character, the very same one at that.

It is not easy to say what lineage these nominated tribes by Sheikh Hussen's text belonged to. The names whose pronunciations I have temporarily established as اخمس Akhmas (?); ورجي Wargay (?) and عز'Izz (?) are not identifiable, neither as a Sidamo tribe, nor as a Oromo one, according to my knowledge, that is. Besides, as we have seen above, the presence of a third element in Bali cannot be excluded, that is to say, some Semitic group that had sprung up after the Abyssinian military colonization.



**9.      *THE EMIRS OF HARAR FROM THE XVI CENTURY TO  
THE EGYPTIAN CONQUEST (1875)*<sup>+</sup>**

**SUMMARY:**

1. The early Emirs,
2. An Arabic text on the genealogy of 'Ali ibn Da'ud Dynasty,
3. The English translation,
4. Emir ibn Da'ud, the founder of the Harari Dynasty,
5. The Oromo and the Somali influx,
6. Official titles in the Harari mini-state,
7. A chronological Arabic list of Emirs and its English translation,
8. Data of the list regarding each Emir,
9. Conclusion. A genealogical and chronological resume on the Emirs of Harar.

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<sup>+</sup> [*Rassegna Di Studi Etiopici*, II, 1942, pp. 2-18].

## § 1      The Early Emirs

I have already brought attention to another work of mine<sup>1</sup> to how the published lists pertaining to the emirs of Harar commenced with Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud who reigned from 28<sup>th</sup> June 1647 to 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1662. I had also expressed the hypothesis that the separation of the mini-state of Harar from that of the Imams of Aussa did not occur on the spur of the moment (the chronicles of Aussa do not even make mention about it), but after successive acquisition of a de facto independence by the local emirs, especially of the hereditary title of their offices'.

This hypothesis has now been confirmed by the text, which I am publishing hereinafter and which I have copied in Harar from the same manuscript that contains 'the Chronological List' of the sultans of Shewa.<sup>2</sup> The document regarding the emirs of Harar is on leaf 9 R. It, after having reached the reign of Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr, who reigned from 1755 to 1782, is a copy of a noted version compiled during the second half of the XVIII century.

We know that in August-September 1577 Imam Muhammed Gasa transferred his capital from Harar, which was too exposed to the Oromo blitz, to Aussa; but had left behind his own brother in Harar to govern this old capital with the title of Wazir. And after a few years passed this very same Wazir of Harar comes to be in possession of the throne of Aussa and, owing to a certain event that took place in 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1585, Emir Sa'd ad-Din<sup>3</sup> was nominated as the head of Harar. Later, another document cites Emir Sabr ad-Din ibn Adam, who reigned in 1030 *Hegira* (=1620-1621 AD) and died, so it appears, in 1034 *Hegira* (1624-

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<sup>1</sup> *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'etiopia*, here above, p. 202 note 268.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Il Sultanato Dello Scioa Nel Secolo XIII Secondo Unnuovo Documento Storico*, here above, p. 207-243.

<sup>3</sup> *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'etiopia*, cited here above, p. 18 L, note 170, and p. 202, note 268.

1625 AD).<sup>4</sup>

Then and hitherto the known documents remained silent up to the accession of Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud to the throne in 1647.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, here above, pp. 201-202, notes 265 and 268.

<sup>5</sup> This correction has been ascertained by the other document cited in the following §4.

## § 2 An Arabic Text On The Genealogy of The 'Ali ibn Da'ud Dynasty

هذه تذكرة مباركة ان شاء الله تعالى

وتوفى امير صديق سنة 1056 وتولى بعده ابنه ملاق ادم احد عشر شهرا  
فقتل ثم تولى بعده امير احمد بن وزير ابرام عشر يوما فمات بشرب السم ثم تولى  
بعده امير علي بن داود والامير علي المذكور كان ملاقا اولاً ثم فعل جداف جويت ثم  
فعل وزيراً في ولاية امير صديق ثم تولى الامارة ولا امير علي بن داود عشرة اولاد  
امير هاشم وامير عبد الله وصبر (الدين) ووزير احمد وجامع وادم وصادق وبركات  
وعزالدين وعمردين . ولا امير عبد الله بن امير علي ثمانية اولاد وأمه من عيال  
زكمر امير طلحة امه من قبيلة أنج وامير ابوبكر حاو جراد ومبارك امه من قبيلة  
جري ومحمد جد جراد لماي امه من قبيلة أرومو وجامع امه من اروس وعبد  
الرحمن هو المسمى امير تنبر أمه من قبيلة أرومو ونسله عباس جد مسر ابراهيم  
بن محمد وحمزة جد محمد بن عبدوش وعبدوش جد محمد بن امام عبد الرحمن  
خلف وقفل جويت عثمانوقفل جويت عثمان والد جنست عائشة لقبها طاقة . واولاد  
امير طلحة بن امير عبد الله ثمانية اولاد جراد ابراهيم وجراد خلف وجراد منصور  
ونور وخديجة ام امير ابون وامة الله ام جراد عمر وامنة ام جد عبد القادر صالح  
لابيه وسعيدة . واولاد امير ابوبكر سبعة امير خلف وله ثلاث بنين جراد عمر  
وجراد ابراهيم وجراد محمد عاف . وامير حام وله سبع بنين عبد الرحمن واسماعيل  
وابراهيم واحمد بشير هؤلاء من بنت كوشم جراد مبارك . ومحمد وعثمان وابابكر  
من ست عائشة بنت سيد ابراهيم . وامير يوسف وهم اشقاء وله ثلاث بنين امير  
محمد وامير عبد الشكور وجراد عمر . وامير احمد وله ثلاث بنين جراد يحيى  
وامير ابون وجراد محمد . واقتل جراد علي وله 8 اولاد عبد الله وعبد الجليل وعبد  
القادر من كلثومة بنت امير دلوا وعبد السلام وابراهيم ابا قرطم وعثمان من  
المستولدة وجراد محمد من مستولدة اخرى . واحمد من خديجة بنت ورفاءيت .  
وجراد بشير وله اربع بنين جراد عبد القدوس وجراد عبد الفتاح وجراد عبد المالك  
وجراد عبد الرحمن . وجراد اسمعيل وله ابن واحد يسمى جراد ابراهيم زقيح هؤلاء  
من المستولدة

### § 3      The English Translation

«This, God willing, is a blessed writing.

And Emir Siddiq died in the year 1056. And after him his son, Malaq Adam, reigned for 11 months; he was then killed. Thereafter him, Emir Ahmed the son of Wazir Abram, reigned for 10 days after which he died having drunk a potion.

And then his son, Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud, reigned. The above-mentioned Emir 'Ali was Malaq first, then he was nominated Gaddaf-Goyta; after which he acquired the title of Wazir during 'Emir Siddiq's reign; thenceforward he became the Lord of the Emirate.

Emir ibn Da'ud had 10 male offspring: Emir Hashim; Emir Abdallah; Sabr [Ad-din]; Wazir Ahmed; Jami; Adam; Sadiq; Barakat; 'Izz ad-Din; and 'Umar-din.

Emir 'Abdallah, the son of Emir 'Ali had 8 children and his mother was one of the Zakkamara family, Talhah, whose mother was from the Anag tribe; Emir Abu Bakr, Hawa-Garad; Mubarek, whose mother was from the Geri tribe; Muhammed, the grandfather of Garad Limay, whose mother was from the Oromo tribe; Jami, whose mother was an Arussi; 'Abd ar-Rahman, nicknamed Amirtinabri, whose mother was from the Oromo tribe and whose descendants were: 'Abbas, the grandfather of Masarri Ibrahim ibn Muhammed, and Hamzah, the grandfather of Muhammed ibn 'Abdosh; 'Abdosh, the grandfather of Muhammed ibn Imam 'Abd ar-Rahman; Khalaf; and Qafil-Goyta 'Uthman, the father of Gisti 'Ashah, nick-named Taqah.

The children of Emir Talhah the son of Emir 'Abdallah were 8: Garad Ibrahim, Garad Khalaf, Garad Mansur, Nur, Khadijah, the mother of Emir Abun, Amatallah, the mother of Garad 'Umar, Aminah, the mother of the paternal grandfather of 'Abd al-Qadir Salih and Sa'idah.

The children of Emir Abu Bakr were:

1. Emir Khalaf, who had 3 children: Garad 'Umar, Garad Ibrahim and Garad Muhammed 'Afi;

2. Emir Ham, who had 7 children: 'Abd ar-Rahman, Isma'il, Ibrahim and Ahmed Bashir, all these from a daughter of Koshim Garad Mubarek; Muhammed, 'Uthman and Abu Bakr from Sittah 'Ashah the daughter of Sayyid Ibrahim; Emir Yusuf was the son of the same mother and had 3 children: Emir Muhammed, Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur and Garad 'Umar;
3. Emir Ahmed, who had 3 children: Garad Yahya, Emir Abun and Garad Muhammed;
4. Aftal-Garad 'Ali, who had 8 children: 'Abdallah, 'Abd al-Jalil and 'Abd al-Qadir from Kulthumah the daughter of Emir Dilo; 'Abd as-Salam, Ibrahim Abba Qurtummi and 'Uthman from a slave girl; Garad Muhammed from another slave concubine; and Ahmed from Khadijah the daughter of Warfa'yitti;
5. Garad Bashir, who had 4 children: Garad 'Abd al-Qaddus, Garad 'Abd al-Fattah, Garad 'Abd al-Malik and Garad 'Abd ar-Rahman;
6. Garad Isma'il who had only one son called Garad Ibrahim Ziqeh: All these from a slave girl».

#### § 4 Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud - The Founder of The Harari Dynasty

Above all, this document furnishes us with the names of Emirs who had reigned in Harar prior to 'Ali ibn Da'ud. This one, therefore, was not the first among the emirs of Harar, but only the founder of a dynasty which thereafter ruled that Muslim state for more than two centuries.

'Ali ibn Da'ud came to the throne, as has been deduced from our document, after one of many internal crises which had torn the mini-states of southern Ethiopia to shreds within the vicissitudes of their entire history. Emir Siddiq died in 1056 *Hegira* (1646-1647 AD). His son Adam clung to the throne for less than one year and was killed.

A certain Emir Ahmed the son of Wazir Abram (one of the killed Emir's ministers?) was not able to reign but for 10 days up to when 'Ali ibn Da'ud came into possession of the throne of Harar and who thus founded the dynasty of the Harari emirs.

Regarding 'Ali ibn Da'ud our document records that he already had, under his own predecessor emirs, various offices: one of Malaq, that is to say, the head of a district; the other of Gaddaf Goyta (on which I am not able to give an elaboration yet); and in the end the one of a minister, Emir Siddiq's (Wazir). So here we end up with the usual fact, very oriental indeed, of who, having had exhausted all ranks and offices came to be in possession of sovereign powers in the long run.

But we do still have some pieces of information regarding Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud from another document which says that he had to face a violent Illamo Oromo<sup>6</sup> raid which, on the day of 1<sup>st</sup> September 1662 (17<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1073 *Hegira*) had reached as near as Asma' ad-Din Gate (Shewa Gate for the Abyssinians) and killed the son of the same emir in combat: Sabr ad-Din ibn al-Amir 'Ali b. Da'ud.

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<sup>6</sup> *Documenti Arabi Per La Storia Dell'Etiopia*, cit., here above, pp. 205-206.

## § 5      **The Oromo And Somali Influx**

Let us see further how the succession of emirs took place within the circle of 'Ali ibn Da'ud's dynasty. Meanwhile we mark that our document attests to how, even during earlier emirs' epochs, marriages with Somali and Oromo women were frequent. Indeed, Emir 'Abdallah ibn Ali, the son and the successor of the progenitor of the dynasty, had as wives a Somali woman of the Geri tribe, an Arussi Oromo woman and another one generically indicated as from Oromo tribe. This occurred in the middle of the XVII century while wars with the Oromo were still afoot. This explains how the Hararis, though retaining their own Semitic language, had greatly undergone Oromo influence as well as the Somali one.

Moreover, our document also retains three nicknames of persons belonging to the Harari dynasty. One of these is Oromo: Abba Qurtummi 'the one of fish'. The other two are Harari: Ibrahim Ziqeh 'the auric' Ibrahim,' most probably because of the colour of his skin?; and Abd ar-Rahman Amir-tinabri 'Abd ar-Rahman 'you would be emir', a nickname which was bestowed on one of Emir Abdallah ibn 'Ali's young sons that sounds extremely odd.



## § 6      Official Titles In The Harari Mini-State

This document also supplies the titles of some magistracies of the mini-state of Harar. The new ones are the following:

1. Aftal Garad. The title of the governor (Garad) of Zaila' (whose Harari name is Aftal). This was one of the main offices of the Harari state, also retained when this title became only honorary.
2. Koshim Garad. The title of the governor of the district of Koshim.
3. Hawa Garad. The governor of the region of Hawa.
4. Gaddaf Goyta. The title which was borne by 'Ali ibn Da'ud, founder of the Harari dynasty (of. above 4). The second part of the title is Goyta 'lord'.
5. Masarri. A title, presumably, but with an unknown value.

We also have the-title Qafil-Goyta, which was used in Adal and then in Aussa (also written Qafil-Gota), 'lord of caravans' literally. I have already talked about this title and its value elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

When it comes to women within our document, the title *Gisti* lady is used (and its equivalent in Arabic is *Sittah*), a title borne by an Emir's wife, probably by the first one married to him. The usage of this title was confirmed by Burton.<sup>8</sup> Praetorius has interpreted it<sup>9</sup> by supposing that *Gisti* represents an ancient \**Negisti*, which hence would not have been present in Harari. Leslau has recently surmised<sup>10</sup> but his seems to be

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<sup>7</sup> *Documenti Arabi*, cit., here above, p. 170 note 155.

<sup>8</sup> R. Burton, *First Footsteps In East Africa. Memorial Edition*, London 1894, Vol. I, p. 191; Vol. II, pp. 21-170.

<sup>9</sup> F. Praetorius, *Die Amharische Sprache*, Halle 1879, p. 77.

<sup>10</sup> W. Leslau, *Etudes De Harari in Journal Asiatique*, October-December 1937, p. 580.

rather fantastic - that *Gisti* represents a name such as *woman*, which comes to compose the one of *Akkisti* aunt when composed - always according to Leslau - with \**ag* uncle and \**kisti* comes to be woman. Meanwhile, apart from this hypothetical reconstruction, I do not think one can differentiate the Harari *gisti* from the Oromo *gifti* lady.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Regarding the change of S>F in Oromo see Praetorius, *Zur Grammatik Der Oromo Sprache*, Berlin 1893, pp. 50-52; and, for the passage of ST>FT, Moreno, *Grammatica A Della Lingua Oromo*, Milano 1939, p. 28.

## § 7     A Chronological Arabic List of The Emirs And An English Translation

The lists of the emirs of Harar, starting from 'Ali ibn Da'ud onward, have been retained and are found in various documents. Basset, when publishing one of the Arabic texts

And the entrance of the Turks took place in the early morning of 26<sup>th</sup> (sight) and 28<sup>th</sup> (calculation) of the month of *Ramadan* of the year 1292.

A removed flyleaf of one manuscript of *Futuh al-Habashah* gives a resume of results reached by comparing that particular list with those others already given by the European travellers<sup>12</sup> up to then. I personally have had the opportunity of collecting other lists during my stay in Harar:

a)     One, which I copied in 1926 from a manuscript I had borrowed from Emir 'Abdullah's own family. It is a highly detailed list which one could consider, because of its provenance, an official one. I am publishing it here by nominating it list A;

b)     Two lists contained in one manuscript, which belong to another source, I had copied in 1927 in Harar. Hereunder I would be calling them lists B and C;

c)     One other list, I came across in 1940 from another manuscript entrusted to, the then Qadi of Harar, Shaykh Yunis ibn 'Abdallah. I would call it list D.

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<sup>12</sup> Rene Basset, *Chronologie Des Rois De Harar* (1627-1887), in *Journal Asiatique*, March-April 1914, pp. 245-258, which we will hereunder cite as 'Basset list'.

## § 8      Data From The List Regarding Each Emir

Now let us examine the chronological data of list A in relation to other variations occurring in lists of other manuscripts I have copied in Harar and to Basset's published one.<sup>13</sup>

### 1. Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud

Comes to the throne, according to list A published here above, on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah*, 1047 *Hegira* (= 29<sup>th</sup> June 1647 AD).<sup>14</sup> The only variant found in our source is in list D, which bears the date of 22<sup>nd</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah*, possibly because of an error: compared to the concordance with all my sources and with that of Basset's list regarding date 26.

Basset has the date 1047 in his published Arabic data while, because of an unfathomable mistake in the translation, he instead has the date 1057, which he himself points out as contrary to the lists collected by Bardey, Paulitschke and Perrand. So the date 1047 as well can be, therefore, called exact. More so because it matches with what has been said in the document previously published by us here in §3, which gives the year 1056 as the date of Emir Siddiq's death and says that Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud reigned for 11 months and 10 days after Siddiq's death.

In a nutshell, the duration of 'Ali ibn Da'ud's reign is subject to variations as presented by the lists:

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<sup>13</sup> Basset has argued and eliminated from his work the any inconsistency contained in lists collected by some travellers. Naturally I would not take this topic further; but only cite the outcome reached by those travellers sometimes, when new elements render them worthy of second scrutiny.

<sup>14</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> June 1647 was a Saturday; but I prefer not to insist on these differences here because of only one day, but I would still limit myself to making a note, because they might be explained with the fact that the eastern nations start the day at sunset.

List	Years	Months	Days
A	16	- 2	+ 15
B and C	16	- 2	- 15
D	16	+ 2	+ 15
Basset's	16	- 2	- 15

Now then, between 26<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1057 and 12<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1073 (date of the accession of the successor of Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud), there elapse exactly: 15 years, 8 months and 15 days (that is to say, 16 years, less 3 months, less 15 days). So number 2 in the column of months in list A (and, in other lists, is for granted) has to be corrected to read 3; and the error is understood because of the easy interchange of ( ٣ ) with ( ٤ ) in the Arabic graphic.

Whatever we know about Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud's reign has been summarized by me in the preceding § 4.

## 2. Emir Hashim ibn 'Ali.

Comes to the throne, according to list A, on 12<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Thani* 1073 (= 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1662 AD). All my lists and the one of Basset agree on this date.

The divergence lies in the duration of his reign, which is 8 years - 5 months - 15 days in lists B and C, while lists A, D and the one of Basset's give the duration of 8 years + 5 months + 15 days. As a matter of fact, from the date of the accession of Hashim ibn 'Ali to that of the accession of his successor, there elapsed 8 (Muslim) years + 5 months + 17 days; but it is possible to imagine two days of intervals between the Emir's death and the official proclamation of his successor.

## 3. Emir 'Abdallah ibn 'Ali

Comes to the throne, according to list A, on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> *Shawwal* 1081 (=12<sup>th</sup> February 1671 AD [which was Thursday. Cf. above p. 372 note 291]).

The only variant is found in list D, which gives Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>, *Shawwal* 1081 (= 6<sup>th</sup> March 1671 AD) as the date of accession. But this date seems certainly erroneous, not only when compared with other matching sources, but also because of the fact that 6<sup>th</sup> March 1671 was Thursday, not Sunday.

Regarding the duration of Emir 'Abdallah ibn Ali's reign, list A agrees with the one of B and with Basset's in fixing the duration at 30 years - 1 month - 10 days. List C, after having followed the error of a copyist which is found in Ferrand's, gives 30 years + 1 month + 10 days. And list D, which is absolutely erroneous regarding this emir, as is obvious, gives the duration of his reign as if it were 30 years. So the data on list A are exact and as a matter of fact, between 23<sup>rd</sup> *Shawwal* 1081 and 22<sup>nd</sup> *Sha'ban* 1111, the date of Emir 'Abdallah ibn 'Ali's successor's accession, there elapse exactly 30 years - 1 month 10 days.

#### 4. Emir Talhah ibn 'Abdallah

Comes to the throne, according to list A, on Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> *Sha'ban* 1111 (= 12<sup>th</sup> February 1700, which actually was a Friday. Cf. above p. 372 note 29). List D has the date of 10<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* (31<sup>st</sup> January 1700), but that day was a Sunday; therefore, the date given by D is erroneous.

So the duration of Emir 'Talhah's reign, according to these lists, is various:

List	Years	Months	Days
A and B	23	- 4	+ 20
C	22	+ 4	+ 4
D	23	+ 4	+ 2
Basset	22	+ 4	+ 20

The effective duration, from 22<sup>nd</sup> *Sha'ban* 1111 to 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1134, the date of the accession of his successor was 22 years, 4 months and 18 days. The difference of two days according to the calculation on list C and that of Basset's list, which are, therefore, the exact ones,

depends on the fact that in them the duration has been calculated between the effective lunar sight of two months, that is to say, from 20<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1111 to 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1134.

#### 5. Emir Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah

Comes to the throne, according to list A. on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1134 (= 31<sup>st</sup> October 1721 AD, which was actually a Thursday). Other lists do agree on that, save list D which presents 21<sup>st</sup> *Rajab* 1134 (= 7<sup>th</sup> May 1722, which was actually a Thursday).

So we have the following figures regarding the duration of his reign:

List	Years	Months	Days
List A	11	-3	- 23
List B	11	+1	+ 4
List C	11	-1	- 4
List D	11		
Basset's	11	-1	+ 4

The correct figure is the one of list C, which corresponds with the interval between 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1134 and 6<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1144, the date of the accession of Emir Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah's successor.

#### 6. Emir Khalaf ibn Abi Bakr

He comes to the throne, according to list A, on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1144 (= 31<sup>st</sup> May 1732, which was a Saturday).

According to the lists, the duration of his reign was:

List	Years	Months	Days
A and C	1	+ 3	+ 22
B & Basset	1	+ 3	
D	1	+ 2	+ 4

Khalaf had effectively reigned for 1 year + 3 months - 3 days.

#### 7. Emir Hamid ibn Abi Bakr

He came to the throne, according to A, on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1146 (= Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 1733 AD). But other lists have their own divergencies: for B and C the date is Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1146 (we have already seen that that day was Friday): for D the date is Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1146 (= 25<sup>th</sup> August 1733 AD, which however was Tuesday); and for Basset's list it is Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1146 (= 16<sup>th</sup> August 1733 AD, which was a Sunday).

In addition to these divergencies and to the ones we will be seeing later regarding the successor's to the throne, the duration of Emir Hamid's reign as well is found to be variously indicated:

List	Years	Months	Days
List A	14		+20
List B, C & D	14	+1	+20
Basset's	14		-20

The correct duration is the one indicated by Basset's list and, therefore, we have to add, in list A, the word (٧!) «minus» in front of the indicated days.

#### 8. Emir Yusuf ibn Abi Bakr

Comes to the throne, according to A, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 1160 (= 25<sup>th</sup> February 1747 AD, which was Saturday). The other lists agree; save D which has the date of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 1160 (= 10<sup>th</sup> March 1747 AD which was really a Monday). While B and C have 14<sup>th</sup> *Safar* 1160 and indicate Friday. The duration of his reign has been indicated in A, in C and in Basset's list, correctly, as being 9 years - 1 - 13 days. And owing to the usual error of the amanuensis, B however gives 9 years + 1 month + 13 days and D, for a wonder, presents 9 years + 13 days.



## 9. Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr

Comes to the throne, according to list A, on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1169 (= 31<sup>st</sup> December 1755 AD which was a Wednesday). The other lists agree; except D which gives the day of Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1169 (= 14<sup>th</sup> December 1755 AD, which was instead a Sunday). The duration of his reign has been indicated with a great deal of divergence.

List	Years	Months	Days
List A	27	- 2	+ 5
List B	27	- 2	- 4
List C	28	- 2	+ 5
List D	28	+ 3	+15
Basset's	27	- 2	

Having calculated and fixed the date of the accession of the successor at that, on which, as we are going to see, all lists (save D) agree upon, that is to say, 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1197, the real duration of Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr's reign therefore, was 28 years - 2 months - 17 days. Based on that sense, various lists are to be corrected.

Under Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr's reign, and precisely in 1175 *Hegira* (1761-1762), the minaret was built and was so-called - I believe - as-Suhayli, which was a part of the ancient al-Jami Mosque in Harar that came to be destroyed by the Shewans later on. This minaret had an inscription in Arabic verse, which I have published here above.<sup>15</sup> Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr is also remembered in local traditions, according to Paulitschke,<sup>16</sup> for his successful expeditions against the Oromo. They,

<sup>15</sup> Cf. here above, p. 325. List D does also erroneously mention the name of the emir as 'Ahmed ibn Yusuf', instead of 'Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr', as all A, B and C unanimously agree upon.

<sup>16</sup> Ph. Paulitschke, *Harar*, Leipzig 1888, pp. 227-228.

who were now surrounding the city of Harar itself, had nominally accepted subjugation under emirs, nevertheless, they continued to live in almost total independence. Once in a while reciprocal raids interrupted that state of truce, when the Oromo, during famine periods, were not in the habit of resorting to the emirs' generous acts.

#### 10. Emir Muhammed ibn Yusuf

Comes to the throne, according to A, on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1197 (= 16<sup>th</sup> December 1782 AD, which was really a Monday). All other lists agree on this date, except D which has 2<sup>nd</sup> *Ramadan* 1192 (=24<sup>th</sup> September 1778 AD, which was a Thursday!). And regarding the duration of his reign, all lists agree and specify 5 months and 19 days, which really was, according to a calculation up to the accession of his successor, in the very same lists. But list D instead assigns 5 years, 5 months and 1 day to the duration of Emir Muhammed ibn Yusuf's reign. See the following hereunder at No. 11.

#### 11. Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur ibn Yusuf

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1197 (= 1<sup>st</sup> June 1783, which was a Sunday). All lists agree on this date; save D, which presents 25<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1197 (=28<sup>th</sup> May 1783, which was a Wednesday!). Pertaining to the reigns of these three emirs: Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr; Muhammed ibn Yusuf and 'Abd ash-Shakur ibn Yusuf, list D, therefore, bears a noticeable chronological divergence. Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr's reign, which starts in 1197 *Hegira*, according to all lists, ends in 1192, according to list D; though starting from that date up to *Jumad al-Akhirah*, Muhammed ibn Yusuf is the one who reigns instead (for '5 years, 5 months and 1 day', according to D); and 'Abd ash-Shakur's reign commences on 25<sup>th</sup> and not on 29<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1197, as is in all other lists. This piece of information supplied by D seems to me erroneous. Above all, there is an error in the name of the emir himself which D calls Muhammed ibn Ahmed instead of Muhammed ibn Yusuf,

as has been unanimously agreed upon and attested by lists A, B and C. Furthermore, the duration of this emir's reign, though still retaining the date given by D, would always be 5 years, 2 months 5 days, and not '5 years, 5 months and 1 day'. It is probable that this oversight is really due to an error committed by the amanuensis, who must have noted the duration of Emir Muhammed's reign not for '5 months but, reiterating,' 5 years and 5 months: so this, as a consequence, shifted the chronology of the emirs; predecessors as well as successors', in succeeding copies.

Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur had a mosque built in Bali, in a sacred area of Sheikh Hussien, which had been dedicated to the godly 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani, as a token and proof of support to the *Qadiriyyah Brotherhood*,<sup>17</sup> as I have already mentioned elsewhere.

## 12. Emir Ahmed ibn Muhammed

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' at-Thani* 1209 (= 19<sup>th</sup> November 1794 AD which was a Wednesday). Lists B and C agree with A. But Basset's list presents Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' at-Thani* 1209 which was Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> 1794 AD. And list D, instead, indicates Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' at-Thani* of the same year (= 24<sup>th</sup> November 1794) which was really a Monday.

The duration of this emir's reign, according to the following lists, is various:

List	Years	Months	Days
A and C:	27		+ 25
B:	27		- 25
D:	27	+ 2	+ 25
Basset	27		- 2

The correct figure is the one of list B because, after having

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. here above, p. 106.

calculated the interval between 25<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' at-Thani* 1209 and 30<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1236, the uttermost dates of Emir Ahmed ibn Muhammed's reign, we come to 27 years - 25 days to the letter and figure.

A reminiscence about Emir Ahmed ibn Muhammed is also made, according to Paulitschke, about his successful expeditions against the Oromo<sup>18</sup> in local traditions.

### 13. Emir 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammed

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1236 (= 5<sup>th</sup> January 1821 AD, which was a Monday for us). All lists agree on this date, save D which suggests Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* 1236 (= 6<sup>th</sup> July 1821, a Friday).

The duration of his reign has been unanimously agreed upon by A, B, C and Basset's lists as: 4 years, 6 months and 7 days. List D instead has 4 years, 3 months and 7 days.

As a matter of fact the interval between Emir 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammed's accession to the throne and the one of his successors is 4 years, 6 months and 29 days. However, Paulitschke had already collected information that Emir 'Abd ar-Rahman was 'killed in prison' (?) and that the successor, Emir 'Abd al-Karim, had to wage war against 'rebel Arab merchants'. On the other hand, the very same Paulitschke brings about a tradition, very ambiguous indeed, about a marginal note on a list he had collected; a note, on which it seems to have to do with - probably - Emir Hashim's reign (prior to one and a half centuries), and the wartime vicissitudes of a certain emir during 1240 and onwards. During these wars the Emir comes to be taken as a prisoner on 22<sup>nd</sup> *Shawwal* 1240 and, after various course of events, he dies - so it appears to be - in 1297 *Hegira*. The dates, beside the narration, seem to be incorrect and highly confused. So a need arises at least to verify the Arabic text (now found in

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<sup>18</sup> Ph. Paulitschke, *Harar*, cit., on p. 227.

Bibliothèque National of Paris, Arabic 4957).<sup>19</sup>

#### 14. Emir 'Abd al-Karim ibn Abi Bakr

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> *Shawwal* 1240 (= 16<sup>th</sup> June 1825 AD, which was a Thursday). All lists agree on this date, excepting the one of D which indicates 2<sup>nd</sup> *Rabi' at-Thani* 1240 (= 24<sup>th</sup> November 1824; a Wednesday). The duration of his reign has been unanimously indicated by lists A, B and C as 9 years and 4 months. Basset's list instead has 9 years and 3 months. So the real duration of this emir's reign was 9 years, 4 months and 10 days. Therefore, the figures of days will have to be added to list A.

There occurred during the reign of this emir, according to Paulitschke, as we have already seen, a war against rebellious Arab merchants. But Bardey, instead had information to the effect that during 'Abd al-Karim's reign, some positions promoted by the Turks of Zaila' had been attacked and the occupants massacred; and Basset justly supposes that it deals with that event after all. On the other hand, it is probable that the Arab merchants, from Yemen or from Hadramut, had tried to establish, beside Zaila' and with the support of armed elements, halting-places for their caravans or minimarkets en route toward the interior; and that, after a certain period of time, had awakened the hostile mistrust on the part of the Oromo and the Somali ethnic groups.

#### 15. Emir Abu Bakr ibn Aftal-Garad

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1250 (= 17<sup>th</sup> July 1834 AD). As a matter of fact, that day was Thursday. This date and the one of the following Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr's happen to be the only ones, in the list, in which one can notice the

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<sup>19</sup> The Arabic text is missing in the photographic reproduction made some years ago from Paulitschke's manuscript photocopies, in which the Arabic section had not been entirely reproduced (Cf. Marcel Cohen, *Etudes D'Ethiopien Meridional*, Paris 1931, p. XV).

difference of two days between the indicated days of the week in the Arabic text and the real and effective ones. Nonetheless, lists B, C and the one of Basset instead agree with the date of 2<sup>nd</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1250 (= 9<sup>th</sup> July 1834 AD which was a Wednesday and hence has the usual gap of one day compared to the one indicated in the Arabic text). Could the error in list. A be due to the fact that the date, in the above-mentioned lists, was according to sight بالرؤيا of 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, and then exchanged for 10 later on? List D has 2<sup>nd</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah*, but see above on No. 11, p. 13.

The duration of the reign has been indicated in A, B and C as 18 years and 2 months. But Basset's list presents 18 years and 3 months. List D instead has: 18 years, 13 months and 9 days, which corresponds to the real interval between Emir Abu Bakr ibn Aftal-Garad's accession to the throne and the one of his successor's.

Emir Abu Bakr was the son of a certain Aftal-Garad whose name has not been mentioned. See above on § 6 for the magistracy of the head of Zaila' (Aftal-Garad). The father of Emir Abi Bakr cannot possibly be identified with Aftal-Garad 'Ali the son of Emir Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah, about whom the above-published text on §2 presents a genealogy; this is so because of a long period of time that had intervened between the two emirs bearing the name Abu Bakr (Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah and Abu Bakr ibn Aftal-Garad) or because the second Abu Bakr does not appear among Aftal-Garad 'Ali's 8 children listed in § 2.

#### 16. Emir Ahmed ibn Abu Bakr

Comes to the throne, according to A, on Tuesday» 10<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1268 (= 1<sup>st</sup> April 1852 AD, which was a Thursday). This is one other case of an apparent difference of 2 days between the day of a week indicated in the Arabic text and the real one (see above on No. 15). Here as well the date presented by A is isolated, because lists B, C and the one of Basset instead indicate 2<sup>nd</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1268, that is to say, (= 24<sup>th</sup> March 1852 AD, which was a Wednesday,) but with the usual difference of only one day, compared with the Arabic list, hence, this date is more acceptable. See hereunder for further information.

‘D’ instead has a Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1268 (= 26<sup>th</sup> December 1851, which was a Friday!).

The duration of Ahmed ibn Abu Bakr’s reign is, according to ‘A’ and ‘C’, 4 years, 6 months and 28 days, which really agrees with the interval between 2<sup>nd</sup> *Jumad al-Akhirah* 1268, Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr’s date of accession to the throne (and this seconds the correction proposed on the same list ‘A’ here above) and 29<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1272, the date of the successor’s accession to the throne. But ‘D’ omits, erroneously, the indication of 28 days. ‘D’ instead has 4 years, 4 months and 27 days; and Basset’s list: 4 years, 7 months and 2 days; all too variant to be considered correct.

Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr received a visitor called Richard Burton, the first European to set foot in Harar, in January 1855.

#### 17. Emir Muhammed ibn 'Ali

He comes to the throne, according to A, on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> *Dhu al-Hijjah* 1272 (= 12<sup>th</sup> May 1866 AD which was really a Saturday). All other lists agree upon this day and date.

The duration of Emir Muhammed ibn 'Ali's reign has instead been differently indicated in the lists:

List	Years	Months	Days
A and C:	19	+ 8	+ 28
B:	19	+ 8	
D:	20	+ 2	+ 24
Basset's	20	- 3	- 14

The real duration was effectively for 19 years, 8 months and 28 days; and so others have to be corrected to read this.

Emir Muhammed ibn 'Ali's reign met its end with the Egyptian entrance to Harar on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1292, i.e., 26<sup>th</sup> October 1875 AD, according to our own lists. But Paulitschke instead fixes the date of the entrance of Ra'uf Pasha's troops to Harar at 11<sup>th</sup> October 1875 AD(=

13<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1292 *Hegira*).<sup>20</sup> However, and since Paulitschke himself recounts that Emir Muhammed ibn 'Ali was killed by an Egyptian soldier<sup>21</sup> during the maiden month of the Egyptian government in Harar (October 1875), it is most probable that the date in the Harari lists do properly refer, not to the Egyptian entrance but, to the death of the Emir.

So we come to the end of 'Ali ibn Da'ud's Dynasty together with the dusk of the local Harari mini-state, after at least two and a half centuries of existence. The brief tentative of Emir 'Abdullahi, 10 years later, to restore the throne of the Emirs, was still being conducted for as long and a little less than after the total defeat at Chalanqo (26<sup>th</sup> December 1886 AD).

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<sup>20</sup> *Harar*, cit., pp. 229-230.

<sup>21</sup> *Works*, cit., p. 231.



## § 9 Conclusion

For the moment I would like to keep the examination of some historical documents on Harar, during Egyptian and Shewan dominion in abeyance. But here, it seems convenient to me now, to present a resume regarding pieces of information, be it chronological or genealogical, of the above-published documents in a way to give, as of the examination made and considered worthy, for one who seeks knowledge regarding the history of Harar.

August-September 1577. Imam Muhammed Gasa transfers the capital of the Muslim State of Harar to Aussa and leaves his brother behind in Harar with the title of Wazir.

2<sup>nd</sup> July 1585. Emir Sa'd ad-Din reigns in Harar. The emirs begin to gradually assert their independence from Aussa.

1620-1621. Emir Sabr ad-Din ibn Adam reigns in Harar, and dies in 1624-1625.

31<sup>st</sup> July 1646. Emir Siddiq dies.<sup>22</sup>

31<sup>st</sup> July 1646. Malaq Adam ibn Siddiq's reign starts. He dies on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1647.

20<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> June 1647. This is the duration of the reign of Emir Ahmed, the son of Wazir Abram.

So we are on the threshold of the successive reigns of the new dynasty of 'Ali ibn Da'ud.

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<sup>22</sup> Emir Siddiq's death date is found in the published document in § 2.



**10. END OF THE EMIRATE OF HARAR BASED  
ON NEW HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS \***

The Egyptian occupation of Harar led by Ra'uf Pasha in October 1875 put an end to the Emirate of Harar, which had maintained its independence at least from 29<sup>th</sup> June 1647 (= 26<sup>th</sup> *Jumad al-Thani* 1057 *Hegira*) under 'Ali b. Da'ud's dynasty, the date of accession of the founding emir. But in the aftermath, when the Egyptians left the country, there took place a tentative for the reconstitution of this Emirate, which was, among other things, ephemeral because, presto, Menelik occupied Harar on the spur of the moment and annexed it to his own kingdom. The chronology of this period and the development of events occurred during this period have been documented in some notes I copied from various manuscripts belonging to private libraries of Harar in 1926-1927. I bring this to light because I think it useful, as useful as what I have already published in other works of mine regarding the history of southern Ethiopia.

I am glad to associate myself with these writings which bestow due honour on Laura Veccia Vaglieri, because of whom, be it at school or in historical research studies we have acquired a great deal of merit regarding oriental studies.

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\* [Annali Istituto Universitario Orientale Di Napoli, N. S., XIV, 1964, Vol. I, pp. 75-82].

## § 1 The Chronology of Harar Starting From 1875 To 1887

- وتولى باشا رؤوف بن محمد ضحوة الاربعاء في شهر رمضان بالرؤيا 24 وبالحساب 28 سنت 1292 وكان مدة ولايته سنتين و 7 شهور
- وتولى رضوان باشا ظهر الاحد في شهر ربيع الثاني 25 بالرؤيا و 24 بالحساب سنت 1295 وكان مدة ولايته سنتين و شهرين و 21 يوم
- وتولى محمد نادى باشا ضحوة الخميس في شهر رجب بالرؤيا 14 وبالحساب 17 سنت 1297 وكان مدة ولايته 3 سنين و 4 شهر و 11 يوم
- وتولى علي رضى باشا ضحوة الاربعاء في شهر محرم الحرام 18 بالرؤيا و 19 بالحساب سنت 1301 وكان مدة ولايته سنت واحدة
- وتولى الامير عبد الله بن الامير محمد صبحه الاربعاء في شهر شعبان 5 بالرؤيا و 4 بالحساب سنت 1302 وكان مدة ولايته سنت واحدة و 8 شهور و 8 ايام
- ودخل بلد هرر ملك الحبشة منليك نهار الاحد في شهر ربيع الثاني 14 بالرؤيا و 15 بالحساب سنت 1304

So we have this chronological list, in addition to that of emirs' which has already been constructed by me in another place:<sup>1</sup>

### a. The Egyptian governors:

1. Ra'uf Pasha, from 28<sup>th</sup> *Ramadan* 1292, for two years and 7 months (28<sup>th</sup> October 1875-April 1878 AD).
2. Ridhwan Pasha, from 26<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' II* 1295, for two years, two months and 21 days (29<sup>th</sup> April 1878-June 1880).
3. Muhammed Nadi Pasha, from 17<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 1297, for three years, six months and 11 days (25<sup>th</sup> June 1880-December 1883).
4. 'Ali Ridha Pasha, from 19<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1301, for one year (20<sup>th</sup> November 1883-November 1884)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Emirs of Harar From The XVI Century To The Egyptian Conquest here above*, pp. 365-382.

- b. The new emir: 'Abdullahi b. al-Amir Muhammed, from 6<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1302, for one year, eight months and 8 days (21<sup>st</sup> May 1885-January 1887).
- c. Menelik's entrance to Harar: 15<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' II* 1304 (11<sup>th</sup> January 1887).

It is as well to mark that this chronological note, which is after all a copy of probably the only manuscript of subsequent annotation, has formally a noteworthy carefulness for exactitude. As a matter of fact, the dates of each and every Muslim month of the year are recorded doubly: according to calculation, that is to say, based on the calendar; and according to sight, which is tantamount to saying, according to the local certainty of the appearance of the month, the commencement of the month. At first sight, there appear, nevertheless, certain discrepancies between the duration of the government run by each Egyptian Pasha and the date of the commencement of his successor's administration. These discrepancies are not evidently to be explained as an error committed by the Amanuensis (it would be unlikely, for example, to exchange 17<sup>th</sup> *Rajab* 1297, the date of the commencement of Muhammed Nadi Pasha's government with 12<sup>th</sup> *Sha'ban* 1297, a date that would result out from the total calculation of the period of the government run by his predecessor; and so is true about the date 19<sup>th</sup> *Muharram* 1301, which regards 'Ali Ridha Pasha, when we say 6<sup>th</sup> *Rabi' I* 1301). It seems to me that, albeit being fairly able to imagine the real date of the take-over of the government of Harar which does not always - rather almost never - coincide with the official discontinuation of the preceding administration, we instead have to keep in mind that when we come across 'one year', the chronological note does obviously intend the Muslim lunar year: and this would explain the dating well.

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Here we are then with other details regarding the conclusion of military operations for the occupation of Harar by Negus Menelik:

كان طلوع الامير عبد الله يوم السبت تاسع وعشرين شهر ربيع الاول سنت 1304 وجلس في ورايلى ثم تقاتلوا يوم الخميس 11 ربيع الثاني 1304 وهرب ودخل البلد ليلة الجمعة 12 في الشهر المذكور ثم هرب ليلة الاحد 14 واختلا البلد ودخل الامارة البندر في هذا اليوم وفي اليوم 15 دخل رئيسهم منلك وجلس الى تمام الشهر ثم تولى على البلاد الامير علي ابوبكر بن الامير عبد الشكور يوم الخميس والموافق 3 جماد الاول سنت 1304 والشمس في الدرجة السادسة من برج الدلو والعشرين من شهر طوبه و15 من كانون الثاني و12 شهرير والقمر في برج الحوت وهو بمنزلة سعد السعود .

«Emir 'Abdullahi's leaving occurred on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* in the year 1304<sup>2</sup> after which he made a stop at Worra Bile. Thereafter, he fought on the day of Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rabi' at-Thani* 1304;<sup>3</sup> and he (the emir) fled and re-entered the city (of Harar) on Friday night, 12<sup>th</sup> of the said month.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, he fled once more on Sunday night 14<sup>th</sup>,<sup>5</sup> after having abandoned the city. So, the Amhara entered the city of the emirate (of Harar) on the very same day. Then, their commander entered (Harar) on 15<sup>th</sup><sup>6</sup> and stayed there to the end of the month. Thereafter, Emir 'Ali Abu Bakr the son of Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur was put at the head of the country on the day of Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> *Jumad al-Ula* of the year 1304<sup>7</sup> on the day when the sun was in the sixth square of the aquarium, which was the 20<sup>th</sup> of the (Coptic) month of *Tuba*, 15<sup>th</sup> of (the Assyrian) *Kanun at-Thani*, 12<sup>th</sup> of the (Persian) month of *Shahrir*; while the moon was under the sign of Pisces and under the station of Sa'd as-Su'ud».

This note confirms the dates of the brief campaign with which Menelik achieved victory at the battle of Chalanqo against Emir

<sup>2</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> November 1886.

<sup>3</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> January 1887.

<sup>4</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> January 1887.

<sup>5</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> January 1887.

<sup>6</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> January 1887.

<sup>7</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> January 1887.

'Abdullahi and came in possession of Harar. This note is contemporary to these events because it stops, having given us the luxury of chronological details of events, at the very first epoch of the union with Ethiopia, when Menelik wished to hand over at least as a trial - the government of Harar to another personage of a local dynasty: Emir 'Ali Abu Bakr the son of Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur, whose principedom never lasted for more than two or three months.<sup>8</sup>

The first note amongst the ones in our possession as well as this second document elucidates the origin and the bonds between these two impermanent emirs with the old dynasty. Emir 'Abdullahi (1885-1886) was the son of the last Emir preceding the Egyptian conquest: Muhammed ibn 'Ali (1866-1875).<sup>9</sup> But Emir 'Ali, who was nominated by Menelik in 1887, was a descendant (grandson of a son?) of Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur who had reigned from 1783 to 1794.<sup>10</sup>

The chronological and the astronomical references regarding the annotation of Emir 'Ali Abu Bakr b. 'Abd ash-Shakur's accession to the throne do finally have an interesting theme for the documentation of the cultural degree to be had in Harar at the close of the last century.

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وكان غزو امارة صبيحة السبت خامس في الشهر المذكور الى بابلي  
واخذوا منهم مالا كثيرا واحرقوا بيوتهم ثم كذلك يوم الاحد رجعوا بعد ما اخذوا  
المال واحرقوا البيوت وقتلوا كثير الناس واخذوا اولادهم وباتوا في ارض دشوا ثم  
دخلوا البلد بعد صلاة الظهر نهار الثلاثاء وجلس قليلا للديوان وطلع الى محطة في  
جبل ابوبكر

«The Amhara raid took place on Saturday morning, 5<sup>th</sup> of the said month, which led them to Babile. They took a great quantity of livestock

<sup>8</sup> Cf. here above, p. 316.

<sup>9</sup> See *The Emirs of Harar From The XVI Century To The Egyptian Conquest*, here above, p. 380.

<sup>10</sup> *The Emirs of Harar*, here above, pp. 376-377.

from them and put their houses on fire; and to add insult to injury, they came back on the day of Sunday. After having had made off with the livestock they put houses on fire, killed many people and kidnapped children. They spent the night at a land called Dasho. And then they re-entered the city (of Harar) after the prayers of *Zuhr*, on the day of Tuesday. He sojourned awhile to grant an audience. He then ascended Mount Abu Bakr as a stopping-place».

This note, therefore, gives information, but unfortunately without any precise chronological references, about the armed expedition of Menelik's troops, which, after the conquest of Harar and departure, made a bee-line for a confrontation with the people of Babile. The Babile people are an Oromo tribe of genealogically Baraytuma stock,<sup>11</sup> but who have nevertheless assimilated various fractions of Somali tribes (especially those from Geri Kombe, belonging to the Somali Darod group). They lived on the south-east of Harar en route to Ogaden.

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So the theme of this note intrinsically regards the Battle of Chalanqo and its immediate consequences:

وكان وقعة الطلنقو التي غزاها الامير عبد الله للمحاربة مع ملك الحبشة نجس منك ذلك في تاريخ يوم الخميس 11 في ربيع الثاني سنة 1304 بعد الظهر ثم حصلت الوقعة وقتل من قتل بالشهادة التي يرجوها كل مؤمن كامل الايمان من المولى الكريم المنان تقبل الله منهم وجزاهم في اعلا درجات الجنان آمين وفي هذه الوقعة ماتوا شهيدا المرحومون اولاد جراد احمد بن الحاج عبد الوهاب وهم محمد بن احمد والحاج ادريس بن جراد احمد والحاج ابراهيم بن الحاج احمد وغيرهم من المسلمين ولا يحصى عددهم الا الله سبحانه وتعالى من اهل البلد والبادية والصومال والعرب وثبت موتهم على الشهادة عند القاضي بشهادة عدل فحكم القاضي بموتهم على السبب المذكور فقسم مالهم بين الورثاء واعطا كل ذى حق حقه وانفصل كل

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<sup>11</sup> Regarding general genealogy of the two Oromo groups: Baraytuma and Borana, Cf. I. Guidi, *Historia Gentis Oromo in Corpus Script. CHR. OR., Scriptores Aethiopici*, t. III (texts), id. (Versio), Paris 1907, pp. 223-225 (text); 195-198 (translation).



احد بما وصل اليه وكذلك قسم لجميع ورثاء من قتل من المسلمين بهذه الغزوة  
 حضر المجلس وطلب القسمة رحمهم الله تعالى رحمة زيادة على ما شهد به رسوله  
 معكم

«The Battle of Chalanqo occurred because of an expedition headed by Emir 'Abdullahi to fight with the king of Abyssinia, Negus Menelik. That took place on the day of Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of the month of *Rabi' at-Thani* of the year 1304, in the afternoon.<sup>12</sup> Then the battle started; and a great deal of people fell in martyrdom that each and every believer of a right faith aspires from the Compassionate and the Merciful Lord. May God welcome them and compensate them with the highest degree of Paradise! Amen. And during this battle there died as martyrs the late lamented sons of Garad Ahmed the son of Hajj 'Abd al-Wahab, who were: Muhammed ibn Ahmed; al-Hajj Idris ibn Garad Ahmed; al-Hajj Ibrahim ibn al-Hajj Ahmed and other Muslims. Nobody knew their number except the Almighty God, hosanna to Him! People from the city as well as the countryside, Somalis and Arabs. Their death as martyrs was ascertained by the Qadi and backed up by valid witnesses; and so the Qadi sentenced their death while fighting for the above-mentioned cause. Their properties were divided among their respective heirs and (the Qadi) gave to each rightful claimant his or her portion and so everybody collected his or her determined quota. Thus, he (the Qadi) portioned (the inheritance) among all inheritors of Muslims killed in that war, to all those who had presented themselves in the tribunal and claimed a portion. May the Almighty God grant them His commiseration in addition to what His own Messenger has Himself witnessed having been there with all of you.

This note is essentially giving us the quiddity of acts passed by the Qadi of Harar for the recognition of 'martyrdom' (in the Muslim sense) and the partition of the heredity of Hararis who fell in the battle of Chalanqo. This having been the case, this note too has its own value for making us understand Harari Islam at the close of their own emirate.

<sup>12</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> January 1887. Cf. above on p. 385, note 3.

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Here, at last, we have a fifth note regarding contacts made between the Hararis and Menelik:

انه بتاريخ سنة 1304 نهض جماعة اكابر اهل مدينة هرر وهم الحاج يوسف برخدله والشيخ علي ابوبكر وجراد عبد الرحمن كينواق وكبير محمد امان وغيرهم ليطلبوا الامان من نجس منليك فوصلوا الى محطة دري شنبر بجبل ابو بكر فحضروا عنده فاذن لهم في الكلام فتكلموا وطلبوا منه الامان فاعطاهم فرجعوا الى البلد فارحين مستبشرين مطمئنين وطلبوا منه ان يتركهم على دينهم المحمدية بجميع ما يجري بينهم من غير ان يتعرض عليهم احد من غيرهم فاجابهم بالرضى والقبول فله الحمد عل ذلك ثم بعده لما قام الى الارتحال الى بلده ارسل الى ثلاثة منهم الحاج يوسف برخدله والقاضي عبد الله والشيخ علي ابو بكر بان يحضروا عنده مع كتابهم القرآن العظيم فحضروا عنده وشيعوه الى ارض هرمايه فضرب خيمته هناك فاحضرهم فطلب منهم ان يحلفوا بكتابهم الشريف على ثلاثة امور احدها ان لا يخفوا عليه شيئا مما كان تستحقه الحكومة التركية من الواردات وغيره والثانية انهم ان رأوا شيئا او سمعوا شيئا من الاخبار الصادرة من الاجانب التي تتضرر به دولته ان لا يخفوا والثالثة انهم ان رأوا شيئا تتضرر به رعيته من الظلم او غيره ان يدفعوا عنهم بايصاله اليه او ايصاله الى من ولى لهم فعلى هذه الثلاثة حلفهم واخذ العهد منهم فنتشر المصحف بين ايديهم فحلفهم عليه بواسطة فيت اورارى سيد درية بن السيد بشرى وهذا ما جرى بينهم فسبحانه على كل شئ قدير لا يسئل عما يفعل انتهى

«On the date of the year 1304 there set out the notable persons of the city of Harar, namely, Hajj Yusuf Barkhadle, Sheikh 'Ali Abu Bakr, Garad 'Abd ar-Rahman Kennawaq and Kebir Muhammed Imam and others to request *aman* from Negus Menelik. They reached Dirre Shimbir camp near Mount Abu Bakr and presented themselves to him (Menelik). He allowed them to talk; and so did they by requesting him *aman*, which he granted. Thence they returned to the city elated, satisfied and confident. They requested him to allow them freedom to apply their own Muslim religion for whatsoever matter arising among themselves and without any

alien interference and he (Menelik) answered them affirmatively and acceptably. May God be praised for that!

Soon after, and when he (Menelik) started to prepare for departure toward his own country, he sent word to three of them (the eminent ones): Hajj Yusuf Barkhadle; Qadi 'Abdallah and Sheikh 'Ali Abu Bakr so that they may come to him with their Book, the sublime Koran. So they presented themselves and followed him as far as Haro Maya, where he pitched camp. He had them brought to him and asked them to swear in the name of their own noble Book three times: the first was, not to conceal what used to be due to the Turkish administration or any other income:<sup>13</sup> the second was, should they ever come across or hear of any news coming from foreign sources which might hurt his (Menelik's) government, not to hide it from him; and the third was, if they ever see any injustice inflicted upon his subjects, or any other things that may have the same outcome, they are to defend them by bringing it to his attention or to the attention of the one appointed to govern them. Thereafter, the Koran was opened in front of them and they were made to swear in its name through the go-between of *Fitawrari* Sayyid Diriye the son of Sayyid Basri. That was what happened between them; and hosanna to the Almighty from Whom no explanation is asked about His own deeds. The end».

Thus Menelik calmed the population of Harar through his meetings with the most accredited eminent personages of the city. During the first meeting the Sovereign concedes aman and agrees that the Muslims of Harar could continue with their own system of being judged by their own Qadi regarding questions arising among them, it being understood that the ones between Muslims and non-Muslims are to be left to the jurisdiction of the governing authority and not to the local Muslim ones anymore. And during the second meeting Menelik, in his turn, asks the people of Harar to commit themselves to the continuation of payments

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<sup>13</sup> 'The Turkish Administration' here denotes the Egyptian one (Egypt being then formally under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire.)

- pro tempore, we ought to understand the gist - of the same dues that the Egyptian administration claimed; and to keep in contact with the new Ethiopian authority to keep them informed about each and any eventual political tidings. On the whole, Menelik has thus managed to obtain all he had already written in his letter to the King of Italy, Umberto I, as early as 4<sup>th</sup> June 1885: ሐረርጌ ስንገባ ሰውን ሁሉ በየሃይማኖቱ እናኖራል። ሃብታሙንም ድኅውንም እኩል እንገዛለን ንጠብቃለን። ንግድም እንዲቀና በጣም እንጥራለን። ጋላውና ሶማሉንም እናሳምናለን። ይህ ማለት ከሸዋ አንስቶ ባሕር ድረስ ያለው መንገድ በጣም እንዲቀና እንድረታ እናደርጋለን ማለቱ ነው። «When we enter Harar, we will let all live according to their own religion. We will rule and will equally protect the rich and the poor. We will do our utmost to attract and promote trade. We will pacify the Oromo and the Somali tribes. And so this means that we will pave the way for traffic from Shewa to the sea through a safe and free route».<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The Amharic text edited by I. Guidi, *Documenti Amarigna*, in *Rendiconti Lincei*, sc. mor. 1891, p. 297. The translation (very imperfect one!) in *Libro Verde Etiopia, presented to the Chamber of Deputies on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1889*, Rome 1889, pp. 202-203.

## INDICES

The variety of themes dealt with in this book and their different dating have induced me to compile these particular, diffused indices. I had to bear in mind as well the hand-writings of individual names, which more often than not come to be cited (by other sources) in different transcriptions; and thus the variations as well come to be cited regarding each name. I have also taken care of full Arab names and have cited them beside that of events. I would like here to thank Maria Nallino (teacher) and the members of, especially Dr. Francesco Castro, for the helping hand extended to me in the *Istituto Per l'Oriente* strenuous correction of proofs, 'without whose help my assiduous work would have ended in vain'.

A summary of data on the Walasma' Dynasty of Ifât from the start to the transfer of the capital of the Sultanate to Harar:

1. 'Umar Walasma'
2. Baziyu (reigns for 20 years)
3. Haqq ad-Din I (reigns for 7 years)
4. Husayn 25 (reigns for 5 years)
5. Nasr ad-Din 26 (reigns for 7 years)
6. Mansur (reigns for 5 years)
7. Jamal ad-Din (reigns for 7 years) Dalhuy (var. Dalhun; Nahuy)
8. Abut (reigns for 2 years)
9. Zubayr (reigns for 2 years; fights with Negus 'Amda Tsyon In 1332)
10. Ma'ati-Layla, (reigns for 2 years)
11. Sabr ad-Din I Muhammed
12. 'Ali
13. Zubayr (reigns for 40 years) (reigns for 2 years)
14. Ahmed Harb 'Ar'ad (reigns for 2 years)
15. Haqq ad-Din II
16. Muhammed Abul-Barakat Sa'd ad-Din (re-reigns from 1376 to 1386) (regions from 1386 to 1416)
17. Sabr ad-Din II (reigns from 1415 to 1422)
18. Mansur (reigns from 1422 to 1425)
19. Jamal ad-Din (reigns from 1425 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1433)
20. Badlay Shihab ad-Din Ahmed (reigns from 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1433 to 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1455) Abu Bakr 'Ali
21. Muhammed ibn Badlay Azhar ad-Din (reign from 26<sup>th</sup> December 1445 to 16<sup>th</sup> December 1471)
22. Ibrahim(reigns from 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1471(reigned from 11<sup>th</sup> May 1472)
23. Shams ad-Din(reigns from 11 May 1472 to April-May 1487)
24. Ibrahim ibn Qat Nasr ad-Din (reigns from April-May 1487 to

4<sup>th</sup> May 1488)

25. Muhammed (reigns for 31 or 32 years, from 1488)
26. 'Ali ibn Muhammed (reigns for 2 years)
27. Fakhr ad-Din(reigns for one or a half years, after 'Ali ibn Muhammed)
28. Abu Bakr(transfers the capital to Harar in July-August 1520)

## The Reigns of the Amirs of Harar

1. Emir 'Ali ibn Da'ud (Reign: 29 VI 1647-23 XI 1662)
2. Emir Hashim ibn 'Ali (Reign: 23 XI 1662-12 II 1671)
3. Emir 'Abdallah ibn 'Ali (Reign: 12 II 1671-31 1700)
4. Emir 'Talhah ibn 'Abdallah (Reign: 12 II 1700-31 X 1721)
5. Emir Abu Bakr ibn 'Abdallah (Reign: 31 X 1721-31 V 1732)
6. Emir Khalaf ibn Abi Bakr (Reign: 31 V 1732 - 14 VIII 1733)
7. Emir Hamid ibn Abi Bakr (Reign: 14 VIII 1733-25 II 1747)
8. Emir Yusuf ibn Abi Bakr (Reign: 25 II 1747-31 XII 1755)
9. Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr (Reign: 31 XII 1755-16 XII 1782)
10. Emir Muhammed ibn Yusuf (Reign: 16 XII 1782-1 VI 1783)
11. Emir 'Abd ash-Shakur ibn Yusuf (Reign: 1 VI 1783-19 XI 1794)
12. Emir Ahmed ibn Muhammed (Reign: 19 XI 1794 -5 I 1821)
13. Emir 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muhammed (Reign: 5 I 1821-16 VI 1825)
14. Emir 'Abd al-Karim ibn Abi Bakr. (Reigns from 16<sup>th</sup> June 1825 to 17<sup>th</sup> July 1834).<sup>1</sup>
15. Emir Abu Bakr ibn Aftal-Garad. (Reigns from 17<sup>th</sup> July 1834 to 1<sup>st</sup> April 1852).
16. Emir Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr (son of the preceding one). Reigns from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1852 to 12<sup>th</sup> May 1866).
17. Emir Muhammed ibn 'Ali, (Reigns from 12<sup>th</sup> May 1866 to 26<sup>th</sup> October 1875)

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<sup>1</sup> The connection of these last four emirs with 'Ali ibn Da'ud dynasty, to which they belonged, does not seem to be clear in our documents. However, Emir 'Abd al-Karim ibn Abi Bakr was probably the son of Abu Bakr, Emir Hamid ibn Abi Bakr's younger son (as appears in the published text in § 2).







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